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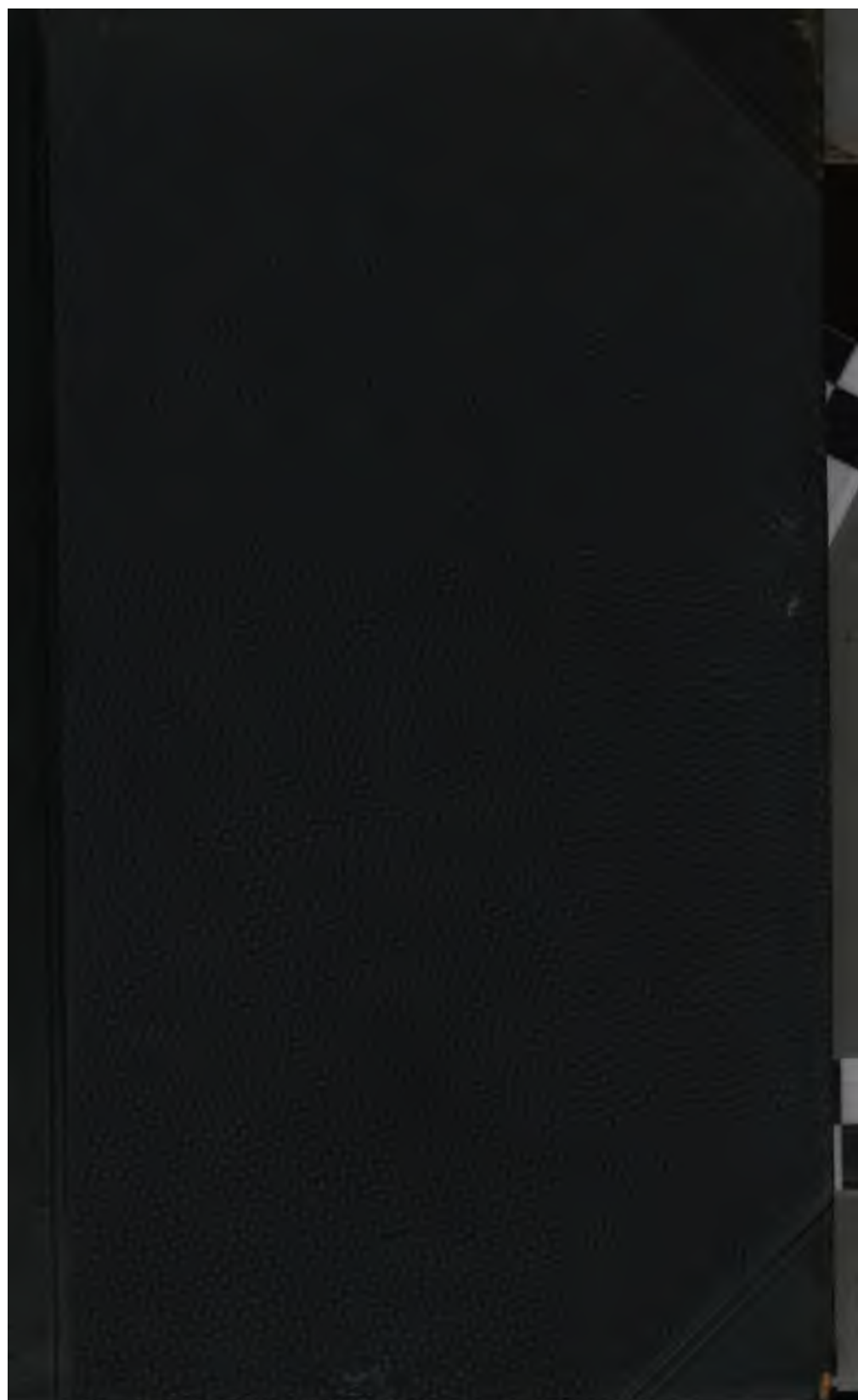
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*H. French, del.*

*J. R. Battershell, sc.*

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# BELGRAVIA

*A LONDON MAGAZINE*

CONDUCTED BY

M. E. BRADDON

AUTHOR OF 'LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET,' 'AURORA FLOYD,' ETC. ETC.

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# BELGRAVIA

MARCH 1873

## STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET,' ETC.

### Book the Second.

#### CHAPTER I.

'Two souls, alas, dwell in my breast: the one struggles to separate itself from the other. The one clings with obstinate fondness to the world, with organs like cramps of steel; the other lifts itself majestically from the mist to the realms of an exalted ancestry.'

A SUNNY afternoon in the second week of May, one of those brilliant spring days which cheat the dweller in cities, who has no indications of the year's progress around and about him—no fields of newly-sprouting corn, or hedges where the blackthorn shows silvery-white above mossy banks dappled with violets and primroses—into the belief that summer is at hand. He has no succession of field birds to serve for his time-keepers, but he hears canaries and piping bullfinches carolling in balconies, perhaps sees a flower-girl at a street-corner, and begins to think he is in the month of roses.

It seemed the month of roses in one small drawing-room in Eaton-place-south—a back drawing-room and of the tiniest, with a dark-green fernery artfully contrived to shed a dim religious light upon the chamber, and at the same time mask the view of an adjacent mews—the daintiest possible thing in the way of back drawing-rooms, with chairs and dwarf couches of the *pouff* species, covered with cream-coloured cretonne, and befrilled muslin; a coffee-table or two in convenient corners; the clock on the maroon-velvet-covered mantelpiece, a chubby Cupid in turquoise Sèvres beating a drum; the candelabra, two other chubby blue bantlings struggling under their barden of wax-candles; velvet curtains half screening the fire in the low steel grate: and ensconced in the most luxurious of the *pouffs*, with her feet on the tapestried fender-stool (a joint labour of the four Luttrell girls), and a large green fan between her face and



the glow, sat Elizabeth Luttrell. She was not alone. Aunt Chevenix was writing letters at her davenport in the front drawing-room; the swift flight of her quill pen might be heard ever and anon in the rearward chamber; and Reginald Paulyn was sitting *à cheval* upon a smaller *pouff*, rocking himself softly to and fro, to the endangerment of the castors, as he discoursed.

'Come now, Miss Luttrell, I want you to like Mrs. Cinqmars,' he said, in an argumentative tone. 'She may not be quite what you'd call good style—'

'I know very little of good or bad style,' interrupted Elizabeth, in a somewhat contemptuous tone; 'your world is so new to me. But certainly Mrs. Cinqmars has hardly what that French secretary of legation I went into dinner with the other night called *l'air du faubourg*.'

'Well, no, perhaps not; dresses a little too much, and indulges rather too freely in slang, perhaps. But she's the most kind-hearted creature in the world; gives the best parties out—not your high-and-mighty nine-o'clock dinners, with cabinet ministers and ambassadors and foreign princelings, and so forth, but carpet dances, and acting charades, and impromptu suppers, and water parties. You go to her house to amuse yourself, in short, and not to do the civil to a lot of elderly fogies with orders at their button-holes, or to talk politics with some heavy swell whose name is always cropping up in the *Times* leaders.'

'Who is Mr. Cinqmars?' inquired Elizabeth with a supercilious air.

'Henri du Châtelet de Cinqmars. Born a Belgian, of a French-Canadian father and an English mother—that's his nationality. Made his money upon various stock exchanges, and continues so to make it, only extending his operations now and then by buying up a steamboat line, or something in that way. A man who will burst up some of these days, no doubt, and pay ninepence or so in the pound; but in the mean time he lives very decently at the rate of twenty thousand a year. He has literary proclivities too, and is editor and proprietor of the *Turf*, a daily paper in the sporting and theatrical interests, with a mild flavour of the *Age* and the *Satirist*, which you may or may not have seen.'

'I never look at newspapers,' said Elizabeth; 'but pray why are you so anxious that I should like your Mrs. du Châtelet de Cinqmars?' she asked, lowering her fan and gratifying the Viscount with an inquiring gaze from her brilliant eyes, more than ever brilliant since she had drunk the sparkling cup of London pleasures.

'Because she's the nicest person you could possibly have for a chaperon. Ah, of course, I know,' answering her glance in the direction of the busy letter-writer, whose substantial form was visible in the distance; 'your aunt is a plucky old party, and can stand a

good deal of knocking about for a veteran, but I think she'd knock under if she tried Mrs. Cinqmars' work : that blessed little woman shows up at every race in Great Britain—from Pontefract to the Carragh—and at every regatta ; and in the autumn you find her at Hombourg or Baden, gambling like old boots. Now, if you would only put yourself under her wing,' concluded Lord Paulyu persuasively, 'you'd stand some chance of seeing life.'

'Thank you very much ; but I think I have seen enough in the last five weeks to last me for the remainder of my existence. Mrs. Cinqmars is a most good-natured person, no doubt ; she called me "my dear" half an hour after I'd been introduced to her ; and I won't be so rude as to say that she's not good style ; but she's not my style, and I shouldn't care about knowing her more intimately. Besides, papa wants me at home, and I am really anxious to go back.'

She smiled to herself with a pensive smile ; thinking what reason she had for this anxiety ; thinking of the quiet country town, the gray old Norman church, with its wide aisles and ponderous square tower—the church along whose bare arched roof Malcolm Forde's deep voice echoed resonantly ; thinking of that widely-different life, with its sluggish calm, and that it would be very sweet to go back to it, now that life at Hawleigh meant happy triumphant love, and Malcolm for her bond-slave.

But, in the mean time, this other and more mundane existence, with its picture-galleries, and gardens botanical or horticultural putting forth their first floral efforts, its dinners and déjeuners and kettledrums and carpet dances, was something more than tolerable to the soul of Elizabeth. She had made a success in her aunt's circle, which was by no means a narrow one, and had received adulation enough to turn a stronger brain ; had found the cup of pleasure filled to overflowing, and new worshippers everywhere she appeared. Had Mrs. Chevenix been a step or two higher on the nicely-graduated platform of society, Miss Luttrell might have been the belle of the season ; as it was, people talked of her as the beautiful Miss Luttrell, a country clergyman's daughter, a mere nobody, but a creature whom it was a solecism not to have met.

She accepted this homage with an air of calm indifference, something bordering even upon arrogance or superciliousness, which told well for her ; but in her secret soul she absorbed the praises of mankind greedily. She showed herself a very fair adept in the art of flirtation, and had given so much apparent encouragement to Lord Paulyu, that, although she had been only five weeks in town, her engagement to that young nobleman was already an established fact in the minds of people who had seen them together. But she was not the less constant to her absent lover ; not the less eager for his brief but earnest letters. She looked forward to her future without a pang of regret—with rapturous anticipation, rather, of a little heaven



upon earth with the man she adored; but she thought at the same time that her chosen husband was a peculiarly privileged being, and that he had need to rejoice with a measureless joy in having won so rare a prize.

'If he could see the attention I receive here, he might think it almost strange that I should love him better than all the rest of the world,' she said to herself.

'Going back to Hawleigh!' cried Lord Paulyn aghast. 'Why, you mustn't dream of such a thing till after the Goodwood week! I have set my heart on showing you Goodwood.'

'What is Goodwood?' asked Elizabeth, thinking it might be some new kind of game—an improvement upon croquet perhaps; 'and when is the Goodwood week?'

'Towards the end of July.'

'In July; that would never do. I must go home in a fortnight at the latest.'

'Why, your aunt told me you were coming up for the season!'

'My aunt had no right to say anything of the kind.'

'O, but it's positively absurd,' exclaimed the Viscount, 'going back just when there'll be most people in town, and to such a dingy old hole as Hawleigh. What possible necessity can there be for your returning? Mr. Luttrell has your three sisters to take care of him. He'll do well enough, I should think.'

'O, yes, I daresay he will get on very well,' said Elizabeth, thinking of another person who had written lately to inquire, rather seriously, whether the few weeks were not nearly over, whether she had not had ample time already for her brief survey of a world whose pomps and vanities she was going to renounce for ever, only thereby conforming to the pious promises of her godfathers and godmothers, which her own lips had ratified at her confirmation.

'Come, now,' said Lord Paulyn, returning to the charge, 'do let me arrange an alliance between you and Mrs. Cinqmars. She's just the kind of person with whom you could enjoy yourself. She has a box on the grand-stand at Epsom and Ascot every year—I shouldn't wonder if she had bought the freehold of them—and always takes a brace of pretty girls with her. If you would only let her drive you down to the Derby now, to-morrow week, I'll be responsible for your having a delightful day; and I'll be in attendance to show you everything and everybody worth seeing.'

'Thanks. I don't think my aunt cares for Mrs. Cinqmars.'

'Your aunt is about a century behind the times; but perhaps Flora—Mrs. C.—hasn't been civil enough to her. Let me drive you and Mrs. Chevenix down to Fulham this afternoon. Tuesday's her day for receiving, and you'll see no end of nice people there. I'll send my groom for the drag, and take you through the Park in good style.'

A four-in-hand seemed to Elizabeth the glory and triumph of

the age; and there was nothing particular in the Eaton-place programme for this afternoon.

'I should like it very well,' she said, brightening, 'if auntie would consent.'

'O, I'll soon settle that,' replied Lord Paulyn, rising from his *pouff*, and going into the next room.

Mrs. Chevenix, after a little diplomatic hesitation, consented to everything except the drag.

'No young lady, with a proper regard for her reputation, can ride on the box-seat of a four-in-hand, unless the coachman is her brother or her husband.'

'I'm very glad I'm not the first, in this case,' said Lord Paulyn; 'and I certainly mean to be the second, if I can.'

These were the plainest words the Viscount had yet spoken, and they moved the spirit of aunt Chevenix with exceeding joy, albeit she knew that her niece was engaged to Mr. Forde.

'If you really wish us to visit Mrs. Cinqmars—and you know, dear Lord Paulyn, there is very little I would not do to oblige you,' she said, with a maternal air—'I'll take Lizzie down to the Rancho in the brougham, and you can join us there if you like. Mrs. Cinqmars has called upon me several times, and I have not returned her visits. She seems a very good-natured little person; but, you see, I am getting an old woman, and don't care much about cultivating new acquaintance.'

Thus Mrs. Chevenix, who would have run herself into a fever in the pursuit of an unknown countess.

Lord Paulyn waived the question of the drag regretfully.

'My horses haven't been as fit as they are to-day since they came from grass,' he said, 'but I'll drive down alone. What time will you start? It's just four; Mrs. Cinqmars is always in full force from five to six.'

'If you'll be kind enough to ring the bell, I'll order the carriage for a quarter to five. I shall have time to dress after I've finished my letters for the general post.'

'Can't think how any one can write letters, now we've got the telegraph,' said Lord Paulyn, staring in amazement at aunt Chevenix's bulky despatches; 'I always wire.'

'But if you were in love, and separated from the object of your affections?' suggested Mrs. Chevenix, smiling.

'I should wire; or if I had something uncommonly spooney to say, I might spell it backwards in the second column of the *Times*. I don't know how to write a letter; indeed, I'm not at all clear that I haven't forgotten how to write long-hand altogether. I keep my betting-book in cipher; and when I send a telegram, I always dictate the message to the post-office clerk.'

'But I should have *thought* now, with respect to your racehorses,



the telegraph system might be dangerous. There are things you want to keep dark, as you call it, are there not ?

'Of course there are. But we've got our code, my trainer and I, and our own private names for every brute in my stable. Got a message this morning: "Bryant and May taken to the bassoon." By which I know that Vesuvian, a two-year-old I was backing for next year, has been run out of her wind in some confounded trial, and is musical.'

'Musical !'

'Yes, ma'am ; a roarer, if you want it in plain English.'

'Dear me, how provoking !' said Mrs. Chevenix, with a sympathetic countenance, but with not the faintest idea what the Viscount meant.

Elizabeth consented to the Rancho business languidly.

'I'd rather stay at home and finish my novel,' she said, looking at an open volume lying on one of the *pouffs*. 'You can't imagine what an exciting chapter you interrupted, Lord Paulyn ; but of course I shall go if auntie likes. Auntie has such an insatiable appetite for society.'

Mrs. Chevenix raised her eyebrows, and regarded her niece with admiring wonder. 'Who would ever imagine the child had been reared in a Devonshire vicarage !' she exclaimed, as Elizabeth sat fanning herself, an image of listless grace.

'Who would have supposed Venus came out of the sea !' replied the Viscount. 'She didn't look weedy, or sandy, or shell-fishy, that ever I heard of ; but came up smiling, with her hair combed out as neatly as the tails and manes of my fillies. And as to rustic bringing-up, there was that young woman in the play—Lady Teazle, you know. See how she carried on.'

The Viscount departed after this, happy in the prospect of meeting Elizabeth an hour later in the happy hunting-grounds of the Rancho, perhaps the best field for flirtation within four miles of Hyde-park-corner.

'Elizabeth,' exclaimed Mrs. Chevenix, when they were alone, with an air of almost awful solemnity, 'there is a coronet lying at your feet, if you have only the wisdom to pick it up. I am not going to make any complaint, or to express my opinions, or to say anything in disparagement of *that person*. I have kept my feelings upon *that* subject locked within my breast, at any cost of pain to myself. But if, when you have looked around you, and seen what the world is made of, you can be so infatuated as to persist in your mad course, I can only pity you.'

'Don't take the trouble to do that, auntie. I can imagine no higher happiness than that which I have chosen. A coronet is a grand thing, of course, with all the other things that go along with it. I am not going to pretend that I don't care for the world and

its pleasures. I do care for them. I have enjoyed my life in the last three weeks more than I thought it possible that life could be enjoyed. I fear that I have an infinite capacity for frivolity. And yet I shall be proud to surrender all these things for the love of the man I have chosen.'

'The man you have chosen!' repeated Mrs. Chevenix, with a shiver. 'My dearest Lizzie, is there not a shade of indelicacy in the very phrase?'

'I can't help that,' answered Elizabeth coolly; 'I know that I did choose him. I chose him out from all creation for the lord of my life, worshipped him in secret when I thought he was indifferent to me; should have died of a broken heart, I believe, or at any rate of mortification and disappointment, if he had never returned my love.'

This was a bold declaration intended to extinguish aunt Chevenix at once and for ever.

'My poor child,' said the matron, shaking her head with a deploring air, 'I am inexpressibly grieved to hear you speak in that wild manner of such a person as your father's curate. A man in that position cannot afford to be loved in that exaggerated way. A *grande passion* is out of keeping among people with limited incomes and their career to make in the world. With people of established position it is different, of course; and though I might smile at such an infatuation, were you to entertain it for Lord Paulyn I could hardly disapprove. You and he would be as far removed from the vulgar herd of engaged persons as a prince and princess in a fairy tale, and might safely indulge in some little extravagance.'

'You need fear very little extravagance on my part if Lord Paulyn were my accepted lover,' answered Elizabeth, with a cynical laugh. 'Imagine any one mated to that prosaic being, with his slang and his stable talk!'

'In spite of those small drawbacks—which, after all, are natural to his youth and open-hearted disposition—I believe him to be capable of a most devoted attachment. I have seen him gaze at you, Elizabeth, in a way that made my blood run cold when I considered that you were capable of trampling upon such a heart for the sake of a Scotch curate. However, I will say nothing,' concluded Mrs. Chevenix with heroism, after having said all she wanted to say.

In half-an-hour the two ladies were dressed, and on their way to Fulham; Elizabeth enveloped in a fleecy cloud of whiteness, with gleams of lustrous mauve here and there among her drapery, and a mauve feather in her white-chip hat, gloves faultless, parasol a gem: a toilet whose finishing touches had been furnished by the well-filled purse of Mrs. Chevenix. The matron herself was resplendent in gray silk, and an imposing blue bonnet. They had put on their richest armour for the encounter with Mrs. Cinqmars, a lady who spent her life in *trying to dress-down* her acquaintance.



## CHAPTER II.

'Applause

Waits on success; the fickle multitude,  
Like the light straw that floats along the stream,  
Glide with the current still, and follow fortune.'

FULHAM is a neighbourhood of infinite capabilities. It is almost impossible to know the ultimate boundaries of a region to which nature seems to have hardly yet assigned any limit; from squalid streets of six-roomed houses, to splendid places surrounded by park-like grounds; from cemeteries and market-gardens—bare expanses of asparagus or turnips, where the atmosphere is rank with decaying garden stuffs—to arenas reserved for the competition of the fleet-footed and strong-armed of our modern youth, and to shady groves dedicated to the slaughter of the harmless pigeon; from newly-built terraces, rising gaunt and bare in their skeleton brickwork, to ancient red-brick mansions hiding themselves coily within high walls, and darkened by the shade of immemorial cedars. Fulham has stomach for them all. Queer little lanes still lead the explorer to unknown (or at least to him unknown) tracts of inland country; and on that wild shore between the bridges of Putney and Hammersmith there are far-spreading gardens and green lawns which a worldly-minded person might long for as the paradise of his departed soul.

The Rancho was one of these places by the river; a house and grounds which, after belonging to a titled owner, had sunk to gradual decay under undistinguished and incapable tenants; and, at last, coming into the market for a larger price than speculators were inclined to give, had, after hanging on hand for a long time, been finally bought a dead bargain by Mr. Cinqmars.

This gentleman, being amply provided with funds—whether his own or other people's was, of course, a minor question—and being, moreover, blest with a wife who had a taste, set to work to remodel the house, which was old and not capacious, and altogether in that condition in which it is cheaper to pull down than to rebuild. Mr. Cinqmars, however, left the lower reception rooms, which were fine, almost untouched, only widening the windows in the drawing-room to the whole width of the room, and putting a glass roof to the billiard-room, which could be replaced by an awning in warm weather, or thrown open to the sky on starlit summer nights. On each side of these central rooms he built a commodious wing in rustic woodwork, after the model of a Mexican farmhouse in which he had once spent a week during his travels. All round the house he put a wooden verandah, ten feet wide, and paved with cool blue and cream-coloured tiles; and having done this he furnished all the rooms in the purest rustic fashion, with light woods, Indian matting, pastoral

chintzes scattered with violets and primroses; no draperies to the windows, which were amply shaded by Venetian blinds within and Spanish hoods without; very few carpets, but light oak floors polished to distraction, and Indian matting in the passages. It was a house that was built apparently for eternal summer, but was yet so contrived as to be extremely comfortable when March winds were howling round the verandah, or an April snowstorm drifting against the glass roof of the billiard-room. On a real summer's day it was distractingly delightful; and to return from its light and airy chambers to the dingy square rooms of a London house—a mere packing-case set upon end in a row of other packing-cases—was not conducive to the preservation of a contented mind.

But Mr. and Mrs. Cinqmars were people who could not have lived in a house that was not better than other people's. They were people who lived upon their surroundings; their surroundings were themselves, as it were. If anybody asked who Mr. Cinqmars was, his friends and admirers plunged at once into a glowing description of the Rancho, or demanded with an air of amazement how it came to pass you had not seen his horses in the park—high-stepping bays, with brass-mounted harness. There was a place in Scotland too, which Mr. Cinqmars spoke of somewhat vaguely, and which might be anything from half a county down to half-a-dozen acres. He was in the habit of promising his acquaintance good shooting in that ilk; but in the hurry and pressure of modern life these promises rarely came to anything. Every man's autumn is mortgaged before the spring is over; there is nothing safer than a liberal dealing out of general invitations in June or July.

Mrs. Cinqmars was at home every Tuesday throughout the London season, and to be at home with Mrs. Cinqmars meant a great deal. The grounds of the Rancho were simply perfect—ancient gardens, with broad lawns gently sloping to the water; lawns whose deep and tender herbage had been cultivated for ages; forest trees which shut out the world on every side except that noble curve of the river which made a shallow bay before the windows of the Rancho; cedars of Lebanon spreading their dusky branches wide above the shadowy sward. Mrs. Cinqmars did not to any great extent affect gaudy flower-beds—parallelograms of scarlet geranium and calceolaria, silver-gray leafage, and potting-out plants of the pickling-cabbage order—or ribbon bordering. Are not these things common to all the world? Instead of these, she had masses of rough stone-work and young forests of fern in the shady corners of her grounds, and a regiment of century-old orange-trees in great green tubs, ranged along a broad walk leading down to the river. Her grounds were shady realms of greenery, rather than showy parterres. She had her hot-houses and forcing-pits somewhere in the background, and all her rooms were adorned to profusion with the choicest flowers;



but only in the rose season was there much display of colour in the gardens of the Rancho. Then, indeed, Mrs. Cinqmars' lawn was as some fertile valley in Cashmere, and the very atmosphere which Mrs. Cinqmars inhaled heavy with the odours of all the noblest and choicest families among the rose tribe—arcades of roses, roses climbing skyward upon iron rods, temples that looked like gigantic bird-cages overrun with roses, roses everywhere—for a brief season of glory and delight, the season of fresh strawberry ices, and mature but not overgrown whitebait.

On these her days, Mrs. Cinqmars kept open house from five o'clock upwards. There was a great dinner later in the evening, but by no means a formal banquet, for the men who came in morning-dress to lounge remained to dine; mature matrons, whose bonnets were as things immovable, were permitted to dine in that kind of headgear; there was a general air of Bohemianism about the Rancho; billiards were played till the summer daylight; the sound of cabs and phaetons, dog-carts and single broughams, startled the slumbering echoes in the Fulham lanes between midnight and sunrise; the goddess of pleasure was worshipped in a thorough-going unqualified manner, as intense as the devotion which inspired human sacrifices on the shrine of moonéd Ashtaroth.

In fine weather, when the sun was bright and the air balmy, and only occasional shivers reminded happy idlers that an English climate is treacherous, Mrs. Cinqmars delighted to receive her friends in the garden. Innumerable arm-chairs of foreign basket-work were to be found in snug little corners of the grounds; tiny tables were ready for the accommodation of teacups or ice-plates. Champagne and claret-cups were as bounteously provided as if those beverages had been running streams, watering the velvet lawns and meandering through the groves of the Rancho. Wenham's clear ice was as plentiful as if the Thames had been one solid block from Thame to Nore. There was no croquet. In this, as in the flower-beds, Mrs. Cinqmars had been forestalled by all the world. But as a substitute for this universal recreation, Mrs. Cinqmars had imported all manner of curious games upon queer little tables with wiry mazes, and bells and balls, at which a good deal of money and a still larger amount of the manufacture of Piver or Jouvin were lost and won on that lady's Tuesdays. The châtelaine herself even was not insensible to the offerings of gloves; she had indeed an insatiable appetite for that commodity, and absorbed so many packets of apricot and lavender treble buttons from her numerous admirers, that it might be supposed that her husband, while lavishing upon her every other luxury, altogether denied her these emblems of civilisation. But as Mrs. Cinqmars was never seen in a glove which appeared to have been worn more than half-an-hour, it may be fairly imagined that her consumption of the article was large. Taking a moderate view of the

case, and supposing that she wore only three pairs per diem, she would require more than a thousand pairs per annum, and this last straw in the expenses of her sumptuous toilet may have broken Mr. Cinqmars' back. However this might be, Mrs. Cinqmars was singularly successful in all these small games of chance, tempered by skill, and did a good deal of ladylike speculation upon various races into the bargain, whereby the glove-boxes, not paltry toys made to hold half-a-dozen or so, but huge caskets of carved sandal wood, with partitions for the divers colours, were never empty. Young men were seen approaching her through the groves of the Rancho armed with dainty oblong packages, their humble tribute to the goddess of the grove, tribute which she received with a business-like coolness, as her due. There were malicious people who hinted that Mrs. Cinqmars was not inaccessible to larger offerings; that diamond bracelets, ruby crosses, emerald ear-rings, which were not the gifts of her husband, had found their way to her jewel-cases; but as Mr. Cinqmars was exorbitantly rich, this was of course a fabrication. Only there is an order of goddesses somewhat insatiable in the matter of tribute; goddesses who, on being suddenly possessed of the Koh-i-noor, would that instant languish for the Star of the South, as a pendant thereto.

Upon this particular afternoon in May, the air was balmy, and the sun unseasonably warm, for it is only the fond believer in idyllic poets who expects genial weather in May; and the grounds of the Rancho were gay with visitors, brightly-costumed groups scattered here and there in the shade; a perpetual crowd hovering about the footsteps of Mrs. Cinqmars as she moved to and fro among her guests, so delighted to see every one; a cheerful chatter of many voices, and a musical jingle of tea-spoons mildly suggestive of refreshment.

Mrs. Cinqmars was a little woman, with intensely-black eyes and long black hair—hair which she wore down her back, after the fashion of a horse's tail, and which reached ever so far below her waist—hair which she delighted to tie with bright-coloured ribbons in a coigne at the top of her small black head. She was a woman who affected brilliant colours, and as she flashed here and there amidst the greenery, had something the air of a gorgeous paraquito from some far southern isle.

Her hair and her eyes were her strong points, and to come within the range of those tremendous orbs, was like facing a battery of Lancastrians. They dealt ruin across the open country, bringing down their quarry at a terrific distance. To be able to stand the blaze of Mrs. Cinqmars' eyes, was to be case-hardened, tried in the fire of half-a-dozen London seasons. For the rest, she was hardly to be called a pretty woman; her complexion was sallow; and as she wished to have the freehold and not a short lease of whatever beauty she possessed, *she was wise enough to refrain from the famous arts*



of our modern Medea, Madame Rachel Levison. Her small hands and feet, coquettish costumes, brilliant eyes, and luxuriant hair, she considered all-sufficient for the subjugation of mankind.

She received Mrs. Chevenix and her niece with effusion: so kind of them to come, and so on. And she really was glad to see them. They belonged to a class which she was peculiarly desirous to cultivate, the eminently respectable—not that she for her own part liked this order of beings, or would for worlds have had her parties composed of such alone; but a little leaven might leaven the whole lump, and Mrs. Cinqmars was quite aware that the mass of her society did require such leavening. Not that Mrs. Cinqmars was herself in any manner disreputable. She had never been accused of carrying a flirtation beyond the limits which society has prescribed for a young matron; she was known to be devoted to her husband and her husband's interests; and yet the friends and flatterers she gathered around her were not the choicest fruit in the basket; they were rather those ever-so-slightly-speckled peaches which only fetch a secondary price in the market. The class with which Mr. Cinqmars shared the glories of his wealth and state was that class which seems by some natural affinity to ally itself with the wealthy parvenu—second-rate authors, newspaper men, and painters, fastish noblemen, military men with a passion for amateur theatricals, and so on; *toute la boutique*, as Mrs. Cinqmars observed.

Mr. Cinqmars had a two-hundred-ton yacht of notorious speed and sailing capacity, which assisted him in the cultivation of youthful scions of the aristocracy, whose presence imparted a grace to the dinner-parties and kettledrums at the Rancho; but it happened, unfortunately, that the youthful scions were for the most part impecunious, and did not materially advance Du Châtelet's interests. It was not often that Mr. and Mrs. Cinqmars were so fortunate as to cultivate such an acquaintance as Lord Paulyn, and the friendship of that wealthy nobleman had been a source of much gratification to both husband and wife. Reginald Paulyn liked the easy-going style of the Rancho; liked to feel himself a god in that peculiar circle; liked to be able to flirt with agreeable young women who were not perpetually beneath the piercing eye of a calculating parent or guardian, to flirt a little even, in a strictly honourable manner, with Mrs. Cinqmars herself; to play billiards till the summer stars grew pale, or to gamble in moonlit groves where the little bells on the be-wired and be-numbered boards tinkled merrily under the silent night. Lord Paulyn liked to enjoy himself without paying any tax in the shape of ceremony, and the Rancho offered him just this kind of enjoyment. He, too, had his yacht, the *Leprachaun*; so there was sympathy between him and the adventurous Du Châtelet, who had crossed the Atlantic in a half-decked pinnace of thirty tons, and discovered the source of the Nile for his own amusement, before any of the more

distinguished explorers who have made themselves known to fame, according to his own account of his various and interesting career.

'I like the Rancho, you know,' the Viscount would remark to his friends, with a condescending air; 'it's like a little bit of Hom-bourg on the banks of the Thames; and Cinqmars isn't half a bad fellow—a little loud of course, you know; and so is Mrs. C.; and one needn't believe a large percentage of what either of 'em says. But I rather like that kind of thing; one gets surfeited with good manners in the season.'

To these happy hunting-grounds, the Viscount was peculiarly desirous to introduce Elizabeth. It was all very well calling three or four times a week in Eaton-place, and whiling away a couple of hours under the eye, or within reach of the ear, of Mrs. Chevenix; but the lover's soul languished for a closer communion than this, for *tête-à-tête* rambles under the forest-trees at Fulham; for a snug little corner on board Mrs. Cinqmars' barge, when she gave her great water-parties up the river, between Hampton lock and Henley; for waltzes in the rustic drawing-room, where half-a-dozen couples were wont to have the floor to themselves late in the night after the Cinqmars' dinners. The Viscount's chances of meeting his beloved in society were not numerous. His circle was not Mrs. Chevenix's circle, and it annoyed him to hear of dinners and balls to which Elizabeth was going, the dinners of wealthy professional men or commercial magnates, just outside the boundary of his patrician world. The Rancho offered an open field for their frequent meeting, and it was for this reason that the Viscount desired to bring about an alliance between Elizabeth and Mrs. Cinqmars.

Miss Luttrell accepted that lady's enthusiastic welcome with her usual coolness, and allowed her aunt to descant alone upon the charms of the Rancho grounds, and her astonishment on finding so large a domain on the very edge of London. Lord Paulyn had arrived before them, and was ready to carry off Elizabeth at once to explore the beauties of the place.

'I know you're fond of old trees,' he said, 'and you must see Mrs. Cinqmars' cedars.'

Flora Cinqmars looked after the two with an air of enlightenment. So Lord Paulyn was sweet upon that handsome Devonshire girl people talked so much about. The discovery was not an agreeable one. Mrs. Cinqmars liked her friends best while their affections were disengaged; and no doubt if Lord Paulyn married, there would be an end of an acquaintance which had been very useful to her. She was not, however, an ill-natured person, so she gave her graceful shoulders a careless little shrug, and resigned herself to the inevitable.

'I suppose I had better be civil to the girl,' she thought; 'and if he cuts us after he is married, I can't help it. But perhaps he'll hardly do that if he marries a parson's daughter, though he might



if he took up with some heavy swell, who'd run her pen through the list of his bachelor acquaintances, and put her veto on all the nicest people.'

Elizabeth found Mrs. Cinqmars' afternoon by no means disagreeable. There were plenty of pleasant people and well-dressed people, a few eccentric toilets, *pour se divertir*, a good many people with a certain kind of literary or artistic distinction, a mere effervescence of the hour, perhaps a temporary sparkle, which would leave them as flat as yesterday's unfinished bottles of champagne by next season, but which for the moment made them worth seeing. Then there were the grounds, pink and white horse-chestnuts in their Whitsuntide glory, and the river running swiftly downward under the westerling sun.

Lord Paulyn tried his uttermost to keep Elizabeth to himself; to beguile her into lonely walks where he could pour forth the emotions of his soul, which did not express themselves in a particularly poetical manner at the best of times; but Elizabeth was anxious to see the celebrities, and a good many people were anxious to see her, as a celebrity in her own peculiar line, by reason of her beauty; so Lord Paulyn was thwarted in this desire, and was fain to be content with keeping his place at her side, whether she sat or walked, against all comers.

'I never do seem able to get five minutes' quiet talk with you,' he said at last, almost savagely, when Mrs. Chevenix had joined them, and was talking of going back to town.

'I really cannot imagine what you can have to say that can't quite as well be said in a crowd as in solitude,' said Elizabeth coldly.

She gave him these little checks occasionally, not quite forgetting that she was the plighted wife of another man—a fact which she had begged her aunt to tell Lord Paulyn, and which she fondly supposed had been imparted to him. Secure in the idea that the Viscount had been made acquainted with her position, or at any rate serenely indifferent to that gentleman's feelings, she enjoyed her new life, and permitted his attentions with a charming carelessness, as if he had been of little more account than an affectionate Skye terrier. It was one of the prerogatives of her beauty to be admired, and she was worldly-wise enough to know that her position in her aunt's circle was wondrously enhanced by this rumour of Lord Paulyn's infatuation. He had as yet neither committed himself, nor alarmed her, by any direct avowal; she had taken care to keep him so completely at bay as to prevent such a crisis.

And even in the midst of all these pleasures and excitements, in this atmosphere of adulation, her heart did yearn for the lover from whom she was parted; for the light of those dark steadfast eyes; the grasp of that strong hand, whose touch thrilled her soul; for the sound of that earnest voice, whose commonest word was sweeter

than all other utterances upon this earth. She did think of him; yes, in the very press and hurry of her new life, and still more deeply in every chance moment of repose—even to-day under those wide-spreading chestnuts, beside that sunlit river. How doubly, trebly, unutterably sweet this life would have been with him!

'If some good fairy would change the positions of the two men,' she thought childishly, 'and make Malcolm Lord Paulyn, what a happy creature I should be!'

And then she was angry with herself for thinking so base a thought. Had she not won much more than the world in winning him?

'He knows that I am not good, that I am just the very last of women he ought to have chosen, and yet he loves me. I am proud to think of that. I should have hardly valued his love if he had only chosen me because I was good and proper, and a suitable person for his wife,' she argued with herself.

Mrs. Cinqmars entreated her new friends to stay to dinner. There were a great many people going to stay, really pleasant people. Mr. Barjoeve the fashionable novelist, and Mr. Macduff the Scotch landscape painter, whose Ben Lomond was one of the pictures of the year; and Lord Paulyn had promised to stay if they would stay, whereby it would be peculiarly cruel of them to depart. But Mrs. Chevenix was inflexible; she was not going to make herself cheap in society which she felt to be second-rate, however cool the champagne cup, however soft the sward on which she trod.

'You are very good,' she said; 'but it is quite impossible. We have engagements for this evening.'

Lord Paulyn hereupon began to talk of the Derby.

'I want to get up a party, Mrs. Cinqmars,' he said, 'or you shall get it up if you like, as you're a top-sawyer at that kind of thing. Suppose I lend you my drag, and you can ask Mrs. Chevenix and Miss Luttrell, and myself, and a few other nice people; and Cinqmars and I will tool you there and back, eh? wouldn't that be rather jolly?'

Mrs. Cinqmars opined that it would be charming, if dear Mrs. Chevenix would go.

Dear Mrs. Chevenix beheld a prospect of being choked with dust, and blinded by a blazing sun, or chilled to the marrow by an east wind, and was not elated. And after all it might be almost wiser to let Elizabeth go to the races with this rather fast Mrs. Cinqmars, without the restraint of any sterner chaperon. It might bring matters to a crisis.

'He can't propose to her if I'm always at her elbow,' thought the sagacious matron. 'I am hardly equal to the fatigue of a Derby day,' she said; 'but if Mrs. Cinqmars would not think it too much trouble to take care of Elizabeth—'

Mrs. Cinqmars protested that she would be charmed with such



a charge. Elizabeth's eyes sparkled: a race-course was still an unknown pleasure, one of the many mysteries of that brilliant world which she desired to know by heart before she bade her long good-bye to it.

So after a little discussion, it was settled that Miss Luttrell was to go to Epsom in the drag with Mrs. Cinqmars.

'But I must see you between this and to-morrow week,' exclaimed that lady, who, perceiving in which quarter the wind lay, was resolved to make the best of the situation, and establish herself in the good graces of the future Viscountess. 'I have a carpet-dance on Friday evening; you really must come to me, Mrs. Chevenix. Now pray don't say you are full of engagements for Friday night.'

'We are to dine in the Boltons,' hesitated Mrs. Chevenix; 'we might possibly—'

'Drive on here afterwards,' cried Mrs. Cinqmars; 'of course you could. Remember you are to be with me on Friday, Lord Paulyn.'

'I shall certainly come, if—'

'If Miss Luttrell comes. It's really too bad of you to make me feel how little weight *my* influence has. Good-bye, if you positively won't stay to dinner. I must go and say good-bye to those blue and-white young ladies yonder.'

And with a sweeping continental curtsey, Mrs. Cinqmars flitted away in her befrilled-muslin draperies, and wonderful cherry-coloured satin petticoat with its organ-pipe flutings, and flying ebon tresses—a figure out of a fashion plate.

'I've told Captain Callender to drive the drag home,' said the Viscount; 'I thought perhaps you'd be charitable enough to give me a seat in your brougham, Mrs. Chevenix.'

The third seat in Mrs. Chevenix's brougham was entirely at his disposal, not a very roomy seat; he was carried back to town half-smothered in silk and muslin, but very well contented with his position nevertheless.

'Are you going to some very tremendous set-out this evening?' asked Lord Paulyn as they drove homewards.

'We are not going out at all, only I didn't feel inclined to accept Mrs. Cinqmars' invitation, so I had recourse to a polite fiction,' answered Mrs. Chevenix.

'And I am particularly engaged to finish that novel in which you interrupted me so ruthlessly this morning,' said Elizabeth.

'But the novel need not prevent your dining with us this evening, if you have no better engagement,' rejoined Mrs. Chevenix.

'If I have no better engagement! As if I could have a better engagement.'

'You might have a better dinner, at any rate. I can only promise you our everyday fare,' answered the matron, secure in the possession of a good cook. She had made a mental review of her dinner before

hazarding the invitation: spring soup, a salmon-trout, an infantine shoulder of lamb, a sweetbread, a gooseberry tart, and a parmesan omelette. He would hardly get a better dinner at his club; and had doubtless seen many a worse at Ashcombe.

'I should like to come of all things,' said the Viscount. 'And if you'd like to hear Patti this evening, I'll send my man to Bow-street for a box while we dine,' he added to Elizabeth.

To that young lady the Italian Opera-house was still a scene of enchantment.

'I cannot hear Patti too often,' she said; 'I should like to carry away the memory of her voice when I turn my back upon the world.'

'Turn your back upon the world!' echoed Lord Paulyn. 'What do you mean by that? You're not thinking of going into a convent, are you?'

'She is thinking of nothing so foolish,' said Mrs. Chevenix hastily.

'No; but the world and I will part company when I go back to Devonshire.'

'O, but you're not going back in a hurry. You must stop for Goodwood, you know. She must stop for Goodwood, mustn't she, Mrs. Chevenix?'

'I should certainly like to take her down to Brighton for the Goodwood week.'

'Yes, and I would have the drag down, and drive you backwards and forwards.'

'My holiday must come to an end before July,' said Elizabeth; and then turning to her aunt, she said almost sternly, 'You know, aunt, there is a reason for my going back soon.'

'I know of no reason, but your own whims and follies,' exclaimed Mrs. Chevenix impatiently; 'and I know that I made all my arrangements for taking you back to Devonshire early in the autumn, and not before that time.'

Elizabeth's smooth young brow darkened a little, and she was silent for the rest of the drive; but this was not the first indication of a temper of her own with which the damsel had favoured Lord Paulyn, and it by no means disenchanted him. Indeed, by a strange perversity, he liked her all the better for such evidences of high spirit.

'I shall find out the way to break her in when once she belongs to me,' he thought coolly.

The little dinner in Eaton-place-south went off very gaily. Elizabeth had recovered her serenity, and was elated by the idea of a night with Patti and Mozart. She went to the piano and sang some of the airs from *Don Giovanni* while they were waiting for dinner; her fresh young mezzo-soprano sounding rich and full as the voices of the thrushes and blackbirds in the grounds of the Rancho. She was full of talk during dinner; criticised Mrs. Cinquars and the



Rancho with a little dash of cynicism; was eager for information upon the probabilities of the Derby, and ready to accept any bets which Lord Paulyn proposed to her; and she seemed to have forgotten the very existence of such a place as Hawleigh.

Yet after the opera that night there was a little recrimination between the aunt and niece; there had been no time for it before.

'I hope you have enjoyed your day and evening, Lizzie,' said Mrs. Chevenix as the girl flung off her cloak, and seated herself upon a sofa in her aunt's dressing-room with a weary air. 'I'm sure you have had attention and adulation enough this day to satisfy the most exacting young woman.'

'I hardly know what you understand by attention and adulation. If I have had anything of the kind, it has all been from one person. Lord Paulyn has not allowed me to say half-a-dozen words to any one but himself; and as his ideas are rather limited, it has been extremely monotonous.'

'I should have supposed Lord Paulyn's attentions would have been sufficient for any reasonable young woman.'

'Perhaps. If she happened to be disengaged, and wished to secure him for her husband. Not otherwise. And that reminds me of something I wanted to say to you, auntie: you must remember my asking you to tell Lord Paulyn of my engagement to Mr. Forde.'

'Yes, I remember something of the kind.'

'But you have not told him.'

'No, Elizabeth, I have not,' replied the matron, busy taking off the various bracelets in which she was wont to fetter herself as heavily as an apprehended housebreaker, and with her eyes bent upon her work. 'There are limits even to my forbearance; and that I should introduce you to society, to my friends, with that wretched engagement stamped upon you—labelled, as it were, like one of the pictures in the Academy—is something more than I could brook. I have not told Lord Paulyn, and I tell you frankly that I shall not waste my breath in announcing to any one an engagement which I do not believe will ever be fulfilled.'

'What!' cried Elizabeth, starting from her half-recumbent attitude, and standing tall and straight before the audacious speaker. 'What! Do you think that I would jilt him, that after having pined and hungered for his love I would wantonly fling it away? Yes, I will speak the truth, however you may ridicule or despise me. I loved him with all my heart and soul for a year before he told me that my love was not all wasted anguish. I was breaking my heart when he came to my rescue, and translated me from the lowest depths of despondency to a heaven of delight. Do you think that after I have suffered so much for his sake I would trifle with the treasure I have won?'

'Please don't stand looking at me like Miss Bateman in *Leah*,'

said aunt Chevenix, with an ease of manner which was half-assumed. 'I think you are the most foolish girl it was ever my misfortune to be connected with, and I freely admit that it is hardly safe to speculate upon the conduct of such an irrational being. But I will nevertheless venture to prophecy that you will not marry your curate, and that you will marry some one a great deal better worth having.'

'I will never see Lord Paulyn again. I will go back to Hawleigh to-morrow,' said Elizabeth.

'Do just as you please,' replied Mrs. Chevenix coolly, knowing that opposition would only inflame the damsel's pride.

'Or, at any rate, I shall tell Lord Paulyn of my engagement.'

'Do, my dear. But as he has never spoken of his regard for you, the information may appear somewhat gratuitous.'

Elizabeth stood before her silent, lost in thought.

To turn and fly would be the wisest, safest course. She felt that her position was a false one; dangerous even, with some small danger; that Lord Paulyn's attentions, commonplace as they might be, were attentions she, Malcolm's plighted wife, had no right to receive. She knew that all these garish pleasures and dissipations which occupied her mind from morning till night were out of harmony with the life she had chosen; the fair calm future which she dreamed of sometimes, after falling asleep worn out by the day's frivolous labours. But to go back suddenly, after it had been arranged that she should remain with her aunt at least a month longer, was not easy. There would be such wonderment on the part of her sisters, so many questions to answer. Even Malcolm himself would be naturally surprised by her impetuosity, for in her very last letter she had carefully explained to him the necessity for her visit being extended until the second week in June.

No, it was not easy to return to the shelter of Hawleigh Vicarage; and, on the other hand, there was her unsatisfied curiosity about the Derby, that one peculiar pleasure of a great race which had been described to her as beyond all other pleasures. Better to drain the cup to satiety, so that there might be no after longings. She would take care to give the Viscount no encouragement during the remainder of her brief career; she would snub him ruthlessly, even though he were a being somewhat difficult to snub. So she resolved to stay, and received her aunt's pacific advances graciously, and went to bed and dreamt of the Commendatore; and the statue that stalked in time to that awful music—music which is the very essence of all things spectral—bore the face of Malcolm Forde.

## CHAPTER III.

'Bianca's heart was coldly frosted o'er  
 With snows unmelting—an eternal sheet;  
 But his was red within him, like the core  
 Of old Vesuvius, with perpetual heat;  
 And oft he long'd internally to pour  
 His flames and glowing lava at her feet;  
 But when his burnings he began to spout,  
 She stopp'd his mouth—and put the crater out.'

THE Derby-day was over; an exceptionally brilliant Derby, run under a summer-like sky; roads gloriously dusty; western breezes blowing; the favourite, a famous French horse, triumphant; everybody, except perhaps the book-men, and sundry other mistaken speculators, elated; Mrs. Cinquars seeing her way to a twelvemonth's supply of Piver and Jouvin; Elizabeth also a considerable winner of the same species of spoil.

The Viscount was not altogether delighted by the great event of the day. He had withdrawn his own entries two or three months ago, but had backed a Yorkshire horse, from Whitewall, somewhat heavily, sceptical as to the merits of the Frenchman.

'It's all very well while he's among French horses,' he had said, 'winning your Grand Prix, and that kind of thing; but let him come over here and lick a field of genuine English blood and sinew, if he can.'

The Frenchman had accepted the challenge, and had left the pride and glory of many a British stable in the ruck behind his flying heels.

'Couldn't have done it if there wasn't English blood in him,' said the Viscount grimly, as he pushed his way within the sacred precincts to see the jockey weighed. 'I wish I'd had some money on him.'

Instead of the pleasing idea of that potful of money which he might have secured by backing the Frenchman, Lord Paulyn had a cargo of gloves to provide for the fair speculators—whose eager championship of the stranger he had smiled at somewhat scornfully half-an-hour ago—to say nothing of far-heavier losses which only such estates as the Paulyn domains could bear easily.

'I shall pull up on Ascot,' he thought, and was not sorry to resign the reins to Mr. Cinquars during the homeward journey, while he abandoned his powerful mind to a close calculation of his chances for the next great meeting. He was a man with whom the turf was a serious business; a man who went as carefully into all the ins and outs of horse-racing, as a great financier into the science of the stock-exchange, and he had so far contrived to make his winnings cover all his stable expenses, and even at times leave a handsome margin beyond them. Above all things he hated losing, and his meditative brow, as he sat beside Mr. Cinquars, bore a family re-



semblance to the countenance of the astute dowager when she gave herself up to the study of her private ledger.

Even Elizabeth's fresh young voice running gaily on just behind him did not arouse him from his moody abstraction. He had been all devotion during the drive to Epsom, and Miss Luttrell's coldness and incivility, which of late had been marked, had not been sufficient to repel or discourage him. What did he care whether she was civil or uncivil? He rather liked those chilling airs, and angry flashes from brilliant eyes. They gave a charm and piquancy to her society which he had never found in the insipid amiability of other women. What did it matter how she flouted him? He meant to marry her, and she of course meant to marry him. It was not to be supposed that any woman in her right mind would refuse such an offer. And in the mean while these coldnesses, and little bitter speeches, and disdainful looks were the merest coquetries—a *Benedick-and-Beatrice* or *Katherine-and-Petruchio* kind of business. See how uncivil that fair shrew was at the outset, and how much she bore from her newly-wedded master afterwards. Lord Paulyn smiled to himself as he thought of *Petruchio*. 'I've got a trifle of that sort of stuff in me,' he said to himself complacently.

'What is the matter with Lord Paulyn?' asked Elizabeth of Mrs. Cinqmars, when they were changing horses at Mitcham, and the Viscount's gloom became, for the first time, obvious to her. She had been too busy to notice him until that moment, agreeably employed in discussing the day's racing with a couple of cavalry officers, particular friends of Mr. Cinqmars, who were delighted with the privilege of instructing her in the mysteries of the turf. She had a way of being intensely interested in whatever engaged her attention for the moment, and was as eager to hear about favourites and jockeys as if she had been the daughter of some Yorkshire squire, almost cradled in a racing stable, and swaddled in a horse-cloth.

'I'm afraid he's been losing money,' said Mrs. Cinqmars, as the Viscount descended to inspect his horses and refresh himself with brandy-and-soda. 'He ought to have backed the foreigner. He does look rather glum, doesn't he?'

'Does he mind losing a little money?' exclaimed Elizabeth incredulously.

'I don't think there are many people who like it,' answered Mrs. Cinqmars, laughing.

'But he is so enormously rich, I should have thought he could hardly care about it. I know that Lady Paulyn, his mother, is very fond of money; but for a young man to care, I should have thought it impossible.'

'Very low, isn't it?' said Major Bolding, one of her instructors in the science of racing; 'but rather a common weakness; so very human. Only it's bad form to show it, as Paulyn does.'



'It's only rich people who have a genuine affection for money,' remarked Mrs. Cinqmars; 'a poor man never keeps a sovereign long enough to become attached to it.'

The examination of his team did not tend to improve the Viscount's temper. They had sustained various infinitesimal injuries in the journey to and from the course, so he refreshed himself by swearing a little in a subdued manner at his grooms, who had nothing to do with these damages, and then consumed his brandy-and-soda in a sullen silence, only replying to Mr. Cinqmars' lively remarks by reluctant monosyllables.

'Can't you let a fellow alone when you see he's thinking?' he exclaimed at last.

'I wouldn't think too much if I were you, Paulyn,' said Mr. Cinqmars, in his genial, happy-go-lucky manner; 'I don't believe you've the kind of brain that can stand it. I've made a point of never thinking since I was five-and-twenty. I go up to the City and do my work in a couple of hours with pen, ink, and paper; all my figures before me in black-and-white, not dancing about my brain from morning till night, and from night till morning, as some men let them dance. When I've settled everything at my desk, I give my junior partner his orders; and before I've taken my hat off the peg to leave the office, I've emptied my brain of all business ideas and perplexities as clean as if I'd taken a broom and swept it.'

'All very well while you're making money,' said the Viscount, 'but you couldn't do that if you were losing.'

'Perhaps not. But there are men who can't make money without wearing their brains out with perpetual mental arithmetic, men who carry the last two pages of their banking-book pasted upon the inside of their heads, and are always going over the figures. Those are the men who go off their nuts by the time they're worth a million or so, and cut their throats for fear of dying in a workhouse. Come, I say, Paulyn, I know you're savage with yourself for not backing the foreigner, but you can put your money on him for the Leger, and come home that way.'

'Very likely, when there's five to four on him!' cried the Viscount contemptuously. Then brightening a little, he inquired what was to be the order of things that night at the Rancho.

'We've a lot of people coming to dinner at nine, or so, and I suppose my wife means a dance afterwards.'

'Like Cremore,' said Lord Paulyn. 'Mind your wife makes Miss Luttrell stay.'

'O, of course; we couldn't afford to lose the star of the evening. A fine girl, isn't she?' added Mr. Cinqmars, glancing critically upwards at the figure in the front seat of the drag.

'A fine girl!' echoed the Viscount contemptuously; 'she's the handsomest woman I ever set eyes on, bar none.'

Lord Paulyn improved considerably after this, and when he went back to the box-seat took care that Major Bolding had no farther opportunity of demonstrating his familiarity with the arcana of the turf. He engaged the whole of Elizabeth's attention, and was not to be rebuffed by her coldness, and took upon himself the manner of an acknowledged lover; a manner which was not a little embarrassing to the plighted wife of Malcolm Forde.

'I must make an end of it as soon as possible,' she thought. 'I don't know that to-day's amusement has been worth the penalty I have to pay for it.'

The drag was crossing Clapham-common, an admiring crowd gazing upward at the patrician vehicle as it towered above wagonettes, barouches, landaus, hansoms, and costermongers' trucks, when Elizabeth gave a little start of surprise at recognising a face that belonged to Hawleigh. It was only the rubicund visage of a Hawleigh farmer, a man who had a family pew at St. Clement's, and who dutifully attended the two services every Sunday, with an apple-cheeked wife and a brood of children. He was one of a very hilarious party in a wagonette, a party of stout middle-aged persons of the publican order, who were smoking vehemently, and had wooden dolls stuck in their hatbands. She saw him look up and recognise her with ineffable surprise, and immediately communicate the fact of her presence to his companions, whereat there was a general upward gaze of admiring eyes, more or less hazy with dubious champagne.

'What's the matter?' asked Lord Paulyn, perceiving that slight movement of surprise.

'Nothing. I saw a person I know in a wagonette; only Mr. Treby, a farmer who goes to papa's church; but I was surprised at seeing him here.'

'Not very astonishing; the Derby is a grand festival for provincials; and we are such an unenlightened set in the West, we have no great races. For a Yorkshireman, now, there is nothing to see in the South. His own racecourses are as fine as anything we can show him here.'

Elizabeth was silent. She was thinking how Mr. Treby would go back and tell the little world of Hawleigh how he had seen her perched high up on a gaudy yellow-bodied coach, one of two women among a party of a dozen men, dominating that noisy dissipated-looking crowd, with a pink parasol between her and the low sunlight; and she was thinking that the picture would hardly seem a pleasing vision to the eyes of Malcolm Forde. She had meant of course to tell him of her day at Epsom, but then the same things might seem very different described by herself and by Mr. Treby. She tried to take comfort from the thought that, after all, Mr. Treby might say very little about the encounter, and that the little he did say might



not happen to reach Malcolm's ears. Malcolm! dear name! Only to breathe it softly to herself was like the utterance of some soothing spell.

After that glimpse of Mr. Treby's rubicund visage in the wagonette her spirits flagged a little. She was glad when the drag crossed Putney-bridge. How brightly ran the river under the western sun! How gay the steep old-fashioned street, with its flags and open windows and noisy taverns and lounging boating-men! The scene had a garish tawdry look, somehow, and her head ached to desperation. She was very glad when they drove into the cool shades of the Rancho.

'O yes, thanks; I've had a most delightful day,' she said, in reply to Mrs. Cinqmars' inquiry as to her enjoyment of the great festival; 'but the noise and the sunshine have given me a headache, and I think, if you would let me go home at once, it would be best for me.'

'Go home! nonsense, my dear! Your aunt is to dine with us, and take you back after our little dance. It's only half-past seven. You shall have a cup of green tea, and then lie down and rest for an hour, and you'll be as fresh as a rose by nine o'clock. Turner, take Miss Luttrell to the blue room, and make her comfortable.'

This to a smartly-dressed maid, who had come to take the ladies' cloaks and parasols.

Elizabeth gave a little sigh of resignation. If it were possible to grow sick to death of this bright new world all in a moment, such a sickness seemed to have come upon her. But from the maelstrom of pleasure, be it only the feeblest provincial whirlpool, swift and sudden extrication is apt to be difficult.

'I will stop, if you wish,' she said; 'but my head is really very bad.'

In spite of her headache, however, Miss Luttrell appeared at the banquet—which was delayed by tardy arrivals till about a quarter to ten—brightest amongst the brilliant. Mrs. Chevenix was there in her glory, on the right hand of Mr. Cinqmars, and was fain to confess to herself that the society which these people contrived to get about them was by no means despicable—a little fast, undoubtedly, and with the masculine element predominating somewhat obviously; but it was pleasant, when venturing out of one's own strictly correct circle, to find oneself among so many people with handles to their names. Lord Paulyn had by this time entirely recovered his equanimity, and had contrived to take Elizabeth in to dinner—a somewhat noisy feast, at which everybody talked of the event of the day, as if it were the beginning, middle, and end of the great scheme of creation. The wide windows were all open to the spring night; hanging moderator lamps shed their subdued light upon a vast oval table, which was like a dwarf forest of palms and ferns, stephanotis and scarlet geranium. It was quite as good as dining out-of-doors, without the inconveniences attendant upon the actual thing.

A little after eleven o'clock there came a crash of opening chords from a piano, cornet, and violin, artfully hidden in a small room off the drawing-room, and then the low entrancing melody of a waltz by Strauss. The ladies rose at the sound, and the greater number of the gentlemen left the dining-room with them.

'We can leave those fellows drinking curaçoa and squabbling about the odds for the Oaks,' said Major Bolding. 'We don't want them.'

This was an undeniable fact, for the danseuses were much in the minority. There were a sprinkling of wives of authors and actors; a few dearest friends of Mrs. Cinqmars, who seemed to stand more or less alone in the world, and to be free-lances in the way of flirtation; a young lady with long raven ringlets and a sentimental air, who was said to be something very great in the musical line, but was rarely allowed to exhibit her talents; a stout literary widow, who founded all her fashionable novels on the society at the Rancho; and a popular actress, who could sometimes be persuaded to gratify her friends with the 'Charge of the Six Hundred,' or the famous scene between Mr. Pickwick and the Bath magistrate.

Elizabeth found herself assailed by a herd of eager supplicants, who entreated for round dances. No one ever suggested quadrilles at the Rancho, nor were these unceremonious assemblies fettered by the iron bondage of a programme.

'Remember,' said Lord Pauly, 'you've promised me three waltzes.'

'If I dance at all; but I don't think I shall.'

'Neither shall I, then,' answered the Viscount coolly. '*À d'autres*, gentlemen, Miss Luttrell doesn't dance to-night.'

'I'd rather take a refusal from the lady's own lips, if it's all the same to you, Pauly,' said Major Bolding.

'The dust and heat have given me an excruciating headache, and I really do not feel equal to waltzing,' answered Elizabeth.

'Shall I get them to play a quadrille?'

'No, thanks. I'm hardly equal to that, either; and I know Mrs. Cinqmars hates square dances.'

'Never mind Mrs. Cinqmars. Half a loaf is better than no bread. If you'll dance the first set, the Lancers—anything— Shall I tell the fellow to play the Grande Duchesse or la Belle Hélène?'

'Please don't. But if you'll take me for a turn by the river, I should be glad. Will you come, auntie? I don't suppose these rooms really are hot; but in spite of all those open windows, they seem stifling to me.'

Lord Pauly's countenance was obscured by a scowl at this proposition, and Mrs. Chevenix was quick to perceive the cloud. What could Elizabeth mean by such incorrigible fatuity? Was it not bad enough to have a country curate in the background, without intro-



ducing a new element of discord in the person of this dashing major? There was no time for careful diplomacy; the situation demanded an audacious master-stroke.

'Lord Paulyn can take care of you, Lizzie,' said the matron, 'and I'll ask Major Bolding to give me his arm; for I want to talk to him about my dear friends the Clutterbucks. Relatives of yours, are they not, Major?'

'Yes; Tom Clutterbuck's something in the way of a cousin,' growled the reluctant Major, rather sulkily. 'But they're in Rome, and I haven't heard of them for an age.'

He offered his arm to the aunt instead of the niece, with a tolerably resigned air, however, perceiving that the position was more critical than he had supposed, and not wishing to mar Miss Luttrell's chances. So Mrs. Chevenix sailed off through the open window to the lawn, a ponderous figure in purple satin and old point, and Elizabeth found herself constrained to accept the escort of the man she so ardently desired to keep at a convenient distance.

They walked slowly down to the river terrace, almost in silence. That scene of a moonlit garden by a moonlit river is one of those pictures whose beauty seems for ever fresh: from Putney to Reading, what a succession of river-side paradises greets the envious eyes of the traveller! And at sight of every new domain he cries, 'O, this is lovelier than all the rest! here would I end my days.' And all mankind's aspirations after a comfortable income and a peaceful existence include

'A river at my garden's end.'

But it was not the tranquil splendour of the moonlight or the eternal beauty of the river that moved the soul of Reginald Paulyn, and held him in unaccustomed silence. He was angry; some dull sparks of his vexation at having backed the wrong horse yet smouldered in his breast; but he was much more angry at the conduct of Elizabeth Luttrell. It was all very well to be snubbed, to be trifled with, to be played with as a fish that the angler means to land anon with tender care, but there had been something too much of this. The damsel had said one or two things at dinner that had been intended to enlighten him, and had in some measure removed the bandage from his eyes. He wanted to know the exact meaning of these speeches. He wanted to know, without an hour's delay, whether she, Elizabeth Luttrell, a country parson's penniless daughter, was capable of setting him at naught.

He hardly knew in what words to frame his desire; and perhaps at this moment, for the first time in his life, it dawned upon him that the chosen vocabulary of his own particular set was a somewhat restricted language for a man in his position.

Elizabeth made some remark about the beauty of the scene—so much better than any drawing-room—and he answered her mecha-

nically, and that was all until they came to the river terrace, by which time Mrs. Chevenix and her companion, who had walked briskly, were at some distance from them.

'Stop a bit, Miss Luttrell,' said Lord Paulyn, coming to a sudden standstill by the stone balustrade that guarded a flight of steps leading down to the water. 'Don't be in such a hurry to overtake those two; they'll get on well enough without us. I want to talk to you—about—about something very particular.'

Elizabeth's heart sank at this ominous prelude. She felt that it was coming, that crisis which of late she had done her uttermost to avert.

'I can't imagine what you can have to say to me,' she said, with an airy little laugh and a very fair assumption of carelessness.

Lord Paulyn leant upon the balustrade, with his elbow planted on the stone, looking up at her with a resolute scrutiny.

'Can't you?' he asked, somewhat bitterly. 'And yet I should think it was easy enough for you to guess what I'm going to say to you in plain words to-night. I've been saying it in a hundred ways for the last six weeks—saying it plain enough for any one to understand, I should have thought—any one in their senses, at least, and there doesn't seem room for much doubt about yours. I love you, Elizabeth—that's what I have to say—and I mean you to be my wife.'

'You mean me,' cried Elizabeth, with inexpressible scorn, and a laugh that stung her lover as sharply as a blow—'you mean me to be your wife! Upon my honour, Lord Paulyn, you have quite an oriental idea of a woman's position. You are to fling your handkerchief to your favourite slave, and she is to pick it up and bring it to you with a curtsy.'

'You never look so handsome as when you are angry,' said the Viscount, undismayed, and smiling at her wrath. 'But don't be angry with me; I didn't intend to offend you. I should have said the same if you'd been a princess of the blood royal. I only tell you what I swore to myself last November, the day I first saw your face in Hawleigh church: That's the woman I'll have for my wife. I never yet set my heart upon anything that I didn't win it. I know how cleverly you've played me for the last five weeks, keeping me on by keeping me off, eh? But we may as well drop all that sort of thing now, Elizabeth. You are the only woman in this world I'll ever make a viscountess of; and of course you've known that all along, or you wouldn't have given me the encouragement you have given me, in your offhand way. Don't try to humbug me. I'm a man of the world, and I've known from the first that it was a settled thing between you and the old woman—I beg your pardon, Mrs. Chevenix.'

'Encouragement!' cried Elizabeth, aghast; 'I give you encour-



agement, Lord Paulyn! Why, I've done everything in the world to show you my indifference.'

'O, yes; I know all about that. You've been uncivil enough, I grant you, and many a man in my position would have been choked off; but I'm not that kind of fellow. You've given me as much of your society as circumstances allowed—that's the grand point—and you must have known that every day made me more desperately in love with you. You're not going to round upon me and pretend indifference after that. It would be rather too bad.'

Elizabeth was silent for a brief space, conscience-stricken. She had deemed this lordling of so shallow a nature that it could matter little how she trifled with him. He had his *grande passion*, no doubt, every season—hovered butterfly-like around some particular flower in the fashionable parterre, and flew off unscathed when London began to grow empty. That she could inflict any wrong upon him by suffering his attentions had never occurred to her. She had thought at one time even that it would be rather nice to bring him to her feet, and astound him by a cool refusal. And even now, though she was not a little perplexed by a kind of rough earnestness and intensity in his speech and manner, she did feel a faint thrill of triumph in the idea of his subjugation. It would be something to tell Gertrude and Diana—those representatives of her little world, who had sneered at the humble end of all her grand ideas: there would be not a little satisfaction to her pride in being able to tell them that Lord Paulyn had actually proposed to her.

The coronet of the Paulyns, the airy round and top of sovereignty, floated before her vision for a moment, as she looked across the moonlit river, phantom-wise, like Macbeth's dagger. If she had not loved that other one above the sordid splendours of the world, what a brilliant fortune might have been hers! And Reginald was not in any manner obnoxious to her. He was good-looking, seemed good-natured, had been the veriest slave of her every whim, and she had grown accustomed to his society. She had no doubt that he would have made a very tolerable husband; and as the inexhaustible fountain of carriages, horses, opera-boxes, diamonds, yachts, and riverside villas, she must needs have regarded him with a certain grateful fondness, had she been free to accept him. But she was bound to a man whom she loved to distraction, and not to be an empress would she have loosened that dear bondage.

'It is all my aunt's fault,' she said, after that brief pause; 'I begged her—she ought to have told you that I am engaged to be married.'

'Engaged!' cried the Viscount; 'engaged! Not since you've come to town! Why, I know almost every fellow that's been hanging about you, and they've had precious little chance, unless it's some one you've met at those confounded parties on the other side of Hyde-park.'

'I was engaged before I came to London.'

'What, to some fellow in Hawleigh! And you let me dance attendance upon you, and spend three mornings a week in Eaton-place, and follow you about to every infernal picture-gallery till the greens and blues in their confounded landscapes gave me the vertigo, and to every twopenny-halfpenny flower-show, staring at azaleas and rhododendrons; and then you turn round and tell me you're engaged! By ——, Miss Luttrell, if you mean what you say, you're the most brazen-faced flirt it was ever my bad luck to meet with in half-a-dozen London seasons!'

Elizabeth drew herself up, trembling with anger. What, did he dare insult her? And had she really been guilty? Conscience was slow to answer that question.

'How dare you talk to me like that?' she exclaimed. 'I—I will never speak to you again as long as I live, Lord Paulyn.' A woman's favourite threat in moments of extremity, and generally the prelude to a torrent of words.

'By the right you've given me every day for the last six weeks. By the right which the world has assumed when it couples our names, as they are coupled by every one who knows us. Throw me over, if you like; but it will be the worse for you if you do, for every one will say it was I who jilted you. A woman can't carry on as you've carried on, and then turn round and say, O, I beg your pardon, it was all a mistake; I'm engaged to somebody else.' And then suddenly, with a still fiercer flash of anger, he demanded, 'Who is he? Who is the man?'

'The gentleman to whom I have the honour to be engaged is Mr. Forde, my father's curate. Perhaps it would be better for you to make your complaint about my conduct to him.'

'Egad, I should think he'd be rather astonished if I did enlighten him a little on that score! Your father's curate? So it's for the sake of a beggarly curate you are going to throw me over the bridge.'

'You are at liberty to insult me, Lord Paulyn, but I must insist upon your refraining from any insolent mention of my future husband. And now, perhaps, as we quite understand each other, you will be good enough to let me go to my aunt.'

'Don't be in such a hurry, Miss Luttrell,' said the Viscount, white with anger. That he, Reginald Paulyn, should be rejected by any woman living, least of all by a country vicar's daughter, and in favour of a country curate! It was not to be endured. But of course she was not in earnest; this pretended refusal was only an elaborate coquetry. 'I'm—I'm not a bad-tempered man, that I am aware; but there are some things beyond any man's forbearance; and after leading me on as you have done—that you can look me in the face and tell me you're going to marry another man—I won't believe it of you; no, not from your own lips. Come, Elizabeth, be reason-



able; drop all this nonsense. Never mind if there has been some kind of flirtation between you and Forde; let bygones be bygones; I won't quarrel with the past. But give me a straight answer, like a woman of the world. Remember, there's nothing you care for in this world that I can't give you; you were made to occupy a brilliant position, and I love you better than I ever loved any living creature.'

He took her hand, which she did not withdraw from him; she let him hold it in his strong grasp, a poor little icy-cold unresisting hand. For the first time it dawned upon her that she had done him a great wrong.

'Do you really care for me?' she asked with a serious wondering air. 'I am so sorry, and begin to see that I have done wrong; I ought to have been more candid. But indeed, Lord Paulyn, it is my aunt's fault. I begged her to tell you of my engagement. I would have told you myself even, only,' with a feeble little laugh, 'I could hardly volunteer such a piece of information; it would have been so presumptuous to suppose that you were in any danger from our brotherly and sisterly acquaintance.'

'Brotherly and sisterly be hanged!' said the Viscount; 'you must have known that I doated on you. God knows I've let you see it plain enough. I've never hid my light under a bushel.'

After this there came another brief silence. Elizabeth looking thoughtfully at the rippling water, Lord Paulyn watching her face with a gloomy air.

'Come,' he said at last, 'what is it to be? Are you going to throw me over for the sake of this curate fellow? Are you going to bury yourself alive in a country parsonage, teaching a pack of snivelling children psalm-singing? You've tasted blood; you know something of what life is. Come, Lizzie, be just to yourself and me. Write this Forde fellow a civil letter telling him you've changed your mind.'

'Not for Egypt,' said Elizabeth, turning her flashing eyes upon him—eyes which a moment before had been gazing dreamily at the river. 'You do not know how I love him. Yes, I love the world too,' she went on, as if answering that sordid plea by which the Viscount had endeavoured to sustain his suit; 'I do love the world. Its pleasures are all so new to me, and I have enjoyed my life unspeakably since I've been in London, yes, in spite of being parted from him. But I could no more give him up than I could cut my heart out of my body, and live. I am quite willing to admit that I have done wrong'—this with an air of proud humility which was very rare in Elizabeth Luttrell—'I beg your pardon, Lord Paulyn; I entreat you to forgive me, and accept my friendship instead of my love. You have been very kind to me, very indulgent to all my caprices and tempers, and believe me I am not ungrateful.'

'Forgive you!' he echoed, with a harsh laugh; 'be your friend, when I had made up my mind to be your husband! Rather hard

lines. However, I suppose friendship must count for something; and as you prefer the notion of psalm-singing and three sermons a Sunday to a house in May Fair, a yacht at Cowes, a racing-box at Newmarket, and stables in Yorkshire—I should have liked to show you my Yorkshire stables and stud farm,' with a dreamy fondness—'as you have made your choice, I suppose I must abide by it. And we'll be friends, Lizzie. I may call you Lizzie, mayn't I? It's only one of the privileges of friendship.'

'You may call me anything you like, if you'll only promise never to renew this subject, and to forgive me for having unwittingly deceived you.'

The Viscount clasped her hand in both of his, then touched it with his lips for the first time. And as he kissed the little white hand, with a fond lingering pressure, he vowed a vow; but whether of friendship and fealty, or of passionate, treacherous, selfish love, was a secret hidden in the soul of the Viscount himself.

Elizabeth accepted the kiss as a pledge of fidelity, and anon began to talk of indifferent subjects with a somewhat forced gaiety, as if she would have made believe that there had been no love-scene between Lord Paulyn and herself. They left the landing-place, and strolled slowly on to join the Major and aunt Chevenix, who were both sorely weary of their enforced meanderings. The matron smiled upon Elizabeth with the smile of triumph; she had seen those two motionless figures from afar as she paced the other end of the long terrace with her companion, and assured herself that the Viscount had come to the point.

Now, as they came towards her walking side by side with a friendly air, she told herself that all was well. Elizabeth had renounced the ways of foolishness, and had accepted that high fortune which a bounteous destiny had reserved for her.

'I said it when she was still in pinafores,' thought Mrs. Chevenix; 'that girl was born to be a peeress.'

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## IMAGINARY LONDON

A delusive Directory

BY GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA

### XII. SOUPEMAIGRE-STREET AND GRENOUILLE-SQUARE, W.C.

I AM not in the habit of boasting of my acquaintance with theocracy; but it is necessary for the sake of historic truth (as connected with Imaginary London) for me to mention that the Marquis de Carabas and I are very fast friends. I can't help knowing the Marquis: I merely state the fact. Jean-Marie François Her Fierabras-Carabas was my schoolfellow, ever so many years ago at the College Rabelais, in Paris. There was, however, some disparity in our ages, to my advantage now (*aha, mon ami, passé la cinquantaine, tandis que moi—*), but to my disadvantage eighteen hundred never mind how much. Carabas was *en rhétorique* while I was *en cinquième*, as to classes: the consequence was that I was his fag. Fagging, in a moderate and very kindly sense, flourishes in all the great public schools of France; but be not misled by the statement, ye tender-hearted British mammas, who may be thinking, or were thinking, ere the bloodthirsty tomfoolery of the Commune drove everybody, to the extremest Liberals, back into the ranks of Conservatism, of sending your hopeful Billy to Charlemagne or Louis-le-Grand. There is no flogging in those establishments; a circumstance which some parents may consider regrettable. The French fag does not clean his master's boots, nor does he stand by the fender to make toast for him, nor is he in danger of being thrashed with a hockey-stick, or flicked with a handkerchief twisted into the compact sinuosity of an eel, if the toast be not sufficiently buttered (and I am even emboldened to hope that those time-honoured phases of fagging are on the wane at Eton and Harrow; I know they are at Rugby and Winchester); still he has a variety of duties to perform for his patron, which, if he perform them efficiently, not unfrequently get him into terrible scrapes with the authorities of the college; while, if he fails to fulfil them, the big boy to whom he is bond-servant may pull his ears, or tweak his nose, or, in extreme cases, kick him. I never got much licking from Carabas. I was as faithful to him as a fag could be; did his themes for him when he was lazy, and copied out the lines set him for punishment (I could imitate his handwriting exactly); ran upon his errands and brought him forbidden dainties and prohibited literature,



last, for great portability, I concealed under my jacket and between my shoulders. Ah, the many thousands of Latin verses I have copied, not on his account, but on my own, through having been detected by the lodge-keeper (a cantankerous old curmudgeon, who boasted of having been a turnkey at the Conciergerie during the Reign of Terror) in smuggling through the barriers the charming but naughty works of MM. Pigault le Brun and Charles Paul de Kock! The hours, nay days, I have spent on bread-and-butter in the black-hole of the College Rabelais, through some traitor in the camp having denounced me to a *pion* or usher, as the caterer who had brought into the dormitory that rare contraband supper of Lyons sausages, gingerbread, cold boiled spinach, and cherry brandy. I bore neither of my masters any malice on account of my sufferings. As a rule, boys do not bear malice: if they did, a school-master would be thrashed every day, for auld lang syne, by some grown-up pupil, maltreated in former days.

Carabas had passed from the class of Rhetoric into that of Philosophy, when I was recalled to England. I heard that he went afterwards into the Polytechnic school, but left that splendid academy without passing an examination for a commission; that he had studied some time in a seminary with the view of entering the Church, but in the nick of time had kept his pate untensured and his conscience unshackled; that he had been an attaché to the French Embassy at St. Petersburg; that he had gone round the world on some scientific expedition organised by the government of his country; that he was working a sugar plantation in Havana; that he had got up a pronunciamiento in Nicaragua or Guatemala, had nearly been elected President of some distracted Republic, and had more nearly escaped being shot; and that he had taken a contract for supplying the Hawaiian islands with seamless petticoats and boneless corsets. A Frenchman rarely strays beyond the limits of his own land; but when he does begin to wander he becomes as ubiquitous a traveller as Marco Polo or Tom Coriat. He is as rarely addicted to commercial pursuits; but when he does take to trade he is as adventurous a merchant as Sindbad the Sailor or Dick Whittington. At last I heard that Carabas' father—he was only a Count at College, when I fagged for him—was dead, and that he had succeeded to a large estate and a large fortune in ready money. I like rich Frenchmen: as, indeed, I do wealthy Spaniards and Italians. The Latin races, when they have plenty of money, are the most generous and open-handed of mankind. It is only when they are poor they are stingy and avaricious. A Spanish Don in Madrid is Harpagon; meet him in Cuba or Mexico, with plenty of sugarcane or tobacco on his *hacienda*, and he is Mæcenæ doubled with the Man of Ross. With Anglo-Saxons the case seems to be different. How many men I have known who, when they were in a

chronic state of bankruptcy, were the jolliest good fellows imaginable, and were always ready to share their own or somebody else's last shilling with you; but who, when they had come to be worth half a million of money, were as mean as Miser Elwes.

I was thus very pleased when I found one morning at the office a prettily-glazed card, with a handsome coronet and 'Marquis de Carabas' engraved upon it. Accompanying the pasteboard was an affectionate missive from the Marquis himself, telling me that he had called at least half-a-dozen times in the endeavour to see me; but that the office door-keeper had told him that I was in Egypt, or in Australia, or in Japan, *que sais-je?* nay, on one occasion, when pressed very hard by Carabas, had declared his belief that I was dead. Faithful creatures are the janitors at the lodges of newspaper offices, the stage-doors of theatres, and the portals of clubs; and let us hope that the fibs they tell in the interest of their patrons who do not want to be disturbed will be forgiven them. Carabas concluded that he had abandoned the pursuit of his old friend in despair; but that I should be sure to find him any forenoon at the Hôtel de la Crapule, Soupemaigre-street, Soho. I laid down the letter with a sigh; and it was because I knew Soupemaigre-street so well that I uttered the suspiration. 'Poor fellow,' I thought, 'it's all a hoax, then—that newspaper paragraph about his having come into the two millions of francs, and the vast estate in Languedoc. He's as poor as a church mouse evidently; and I shall have to lend him a five-pound note. Well, he'd lend me more if he had it, I'm certain.' So away I went to Soupemaigre-street.

Do you know St. Paradox's Church, Soho, Reverend Sanchez Escobar Whiffles, rector? Of course you do; and you have listened over and over again to the Rev. S. E. Whiffles' edifying Broad-Church sermons (he used to quote Shelley and Tom Moore) in the days before he became such a bright and shining light among the Ritualists. He only quotes Bellarmine and St. Alfonso Liguori now, and wears a hair shirt, *selon ce que l'on dit*, under his M.B. waistcoat. St. Paradox's is about the grimiest church in grimy Soho; and on one side of it is the parish dead-house and Mrs. Spanker's Morning Establishment for Young Ladies; and on the other, Dreibock's German Gasthaus and Madame Boustefaille's French Laundry. Well, in front of St. Paradox's is a cab-stand, supplied at most times only with the most ramshackle old four-wheelers that ever smelt of mouldy straw. Everything in this locality is mouldy, and seems to have been purchased a bargain at Nature's great second-hand furnishing warehouse. Over against the cab-stand is Soupemaigre-street—see, there is Monsieur Tonson, who used to live in Seven Dials, standing at the corner—and one of the dirtiest, most forlorn, most poverty-stricken houses in the street is the Hôtel de la Crapule. It has no politics, unlike the majority



of hosteleries in this district, which are either Legitimist, Orleanist, Bonapartist, or Communist in their landlordism, and attract customers of corresponding persuasions. The Hôtel de la Crapule is simply French. The Germans doggedly refuse to enter it. Catagout, the landlord, declines to sell beer, for the good reason, indeed, that he has a brother in France, a wine-merchant, who sends him over large consignments of perhaps the nastiest *vin ordinaire* that was ever brought from Catalonia to be forged into Bordeaux; and Catagout's Tentonic foes declare that his beefsteaks have an equine origin, that his rabbits are unmistakably feline, and that his made dishes are concocted from the remnants of English cookshop fare, purchased cheap, by contract. Since Gravelotte and Sedan the breach between Germania and Gallia in Soho has, of course, grown wider and deeper; and if the vivacious Gaul met the solid Tenton in Catagout's coffee-room, there would be 'a fite,' as Artemus Ward put it. As for the Italians and Spaniards, the Russians and the Hungarians—all these nationalities abound in this city of refuge—they shrug their shoulders when Catagout's name is mentioned, and observe simply that the man is a brigand, and his house an impossibility. The Poles alone consent to mingle with the French guests at La Crapule. They play at cards with them, and they win their money; for your Frenchman is at once the most inveterate and the unluckiest gamester in creation. He is always losing his temper, and tearing his hair, and cursing his stars; whereas the only way of learning how to win at play is to learn how to lose. I am inclined, however, to think that, on the whole, Catagout has been maligned; and I resolutely refuse to credit the report that he has been, these twenty-five years past, in the employ of the French police as a confidential reporter on the acts and deeds of the ladies and gentlemen who frequent his house. Never mind what they are—bagmen, ballet-dancers, or bankers—nothing in the way of confidential information comes amiss to the Rue de Jérusalem, or wherever the head-quarters of Parisian *espionage* may have been set up since the Commune played Cratostratus, and burnt Dian's Temple, in order to immortalise itself; burning off, at the same time, its nose, in order to be revenged on its face. Catagout a spy! Well, to be sure, he looks very like one. A swarthy little low-browed man, with a shock head of tufted black hair, and two inwardly oblique eyes, eternally trying to look at one another through the brick wall of a long hook nose. Catagout is the husband of Madame Boustefaille, the French washerwoman by St. Paradox's, yonder. Why does she not call herself Madame Catagout? Mystery! but everything in this region is mysterious. Catagout's son—a lanky, sallow good-for-nothing, with greasy black hair falling over his greasier coat-collar—hangs about the Oatsmarket billiard-rooms, or fuddles himself with absinthe at the refreshment-bars of



Laystall-square—that abomination of desolation. Catagout has two daughters. The youngest is the favourite *équestrienne* and *haute-école* rider, Madame Zephirene Tripotin, of Sawderini's Grand Royal Travelling Circus; the eldest keeps a splendid shop for the sale of eau-de-cologne, old point lace, Watteau fans, Dresden china, and Jouvin's gloves, in Old Buck-street; and they *do* say that if you drop in quietly after midnight, and if you happen to be known to Madame Zénobie—that is Catagout's eldest daughter—you may enjoy a comfortable game of French hazard in the back-parlour. Lord Callamain (when he was in his minority and in the Guards—he is Earl of Punterwood now, and a great authority on prison discipline) lost four thousand pounds, I have heard, at La Zénobie's one Sunday morning. 'Twas Catagout from Soupemaigre-street who, with parental tenderness, kept bank for his daughter; and Viscount Callamain, irritated by repeated losses, and excited by too much sparkling Mosellé, beat the banker badly. *Che voleti?* as his Majesty Victor Emmanuel is wont to observe when he is in a difficulty. Somebody must win the money of foolish young men; then why not worldlings who can pounce on the simpletons while they have any cash left of which to be fleeced? The Right Honourable the Earl of Puntington, Chairman of the Bumbleshire Quarter Sessions, is all the better by this time for his little experiences, I have no doubt. He has seen the mysteries. So had the Prodigal Son, who perhaps turned bill-discounter in middle age, and prospered exceedingly.

I found that dear old Carabas breakfasting in Catagout's remarkably ill-favoured and worse odorous coffee-room; and it was with difficulty that he would accept my protestations that I had already partaken of my morning meal. *Timeo Danaos*. I knew the Catagoutian *cuisine*, and knew it too well. The Marquis was splendidly attired, and—his hair and moustaches being carefully curled, scented, and dyed; he had always been a dandy, even in our school-boy days—looked radiant. He told me afterwards that his wardrobe, his linen excepted, always came from English *fournisseurs*. The coats of Smallpage, the boots of Runciman, the hats of Melton, the scarves of Ludlam: these were his only wear. He was breakfasting, nevertheless, at a rickety table, its fourth leg propped up by half a brick, and covered with a hideously dirty cloth. The room smelt of soup, but did not smell of soap. A snuffy old Frenchwoman, with a bandana handkerchief twisted round her head, was lapping some *café au lait* at another table in a corner; and a very fat Frenchman, in striped-woollen trousers and a plaid-velvet waistcoat, was standing in front of the mantelpiece, smoking a big cigar which smelt horribly, and from time to time refreshing himself with a *petit verre* from a *carafon* of cognac on the mantelpiece. When a Frenchman does drink, which is but seldom, he takes his liquor

neat, and incessantly. I knew Carabas to be a gastronome of the first water; and innumerable are the artfully-constructed little dinners of which I have partaken at his expense at Bignon's and the Trois Frères. Thus you may imagine how shocked I was to find that his repast was nothing better than two eggs *sur le plat*, clumsily poached, and swimming in grease in what appeared to be an old tin saucepan-lid, wofully battered; and a beefsteak, manifestly fried, with sooty trimmings, and which was flat, and dog-eared and discoloured like an old Russian-leather pocket-book which had fallen under the grate. Stay; there were likewise some deplorably cooked potatoes, in a dish with three pieces broken out of the rim, and a dab of *fromage de Brie*, which scented the apartment as though some pig of anti-thermal prejudices had recently passed through it. A half-bottle of the celebrated Catagout vintage, which had come from Barcelona *viâ* Bordeaux, flanked this Apician banquet; the glasses were dull and cracked; whole peppers, black and coarse, stood in a saucer; there was no salt-spoon; the mustard was in an egg-cup; a halfpenny box of lucifer-matches stood ready for the smoke which was to follow the *déjeuner*, and the entire apparatus was flanked by a torn copy of the *Gaulois*, five days old, much smeared by mustard and scorched by cigar-tips. And this for a nobleman whose ancestors had been first-class passengers in Noah's Ark—a nobleman with ten thousand a year, too; ten thousand pounds, not francs!

We embraced and gossiped, and agreed to go for a stroll in the Park; and as Carabas rose to depart he informed a dismal French waiter, pale, haggard, and unshorn, who looked very much as though he had been a journeyman waiter from Seven Dials, who had lingered long in captivity among Greek brigands, that he should not dine at the *table d'hôte* that day. 'Nor I either,' I found myself muttering *sotto voce*, 'if I know it. He shall have at least one decent dinner while he is in England, if I can help him to it.' And I remembered the flesh-pots of the Egyptians at the Ozokerit Club, S.W., with pride and joy. Poor fellow! was he really in embarrassed circumstances? Appearances were certainly wofully in favour of such a conjecture. No; there was nothing of the kind the matter with him (I say 'the matter,' since I consider poverty to be about the most agonising ailment, both in a bodily and a mental sense, which can afflict humanity. It is a mortal disease, too; and men die less from being hungry than from being poor). But Carabas talked to me of little else but his wealth, of his charming little hotel in the Avenue de l'Impératrice (*fuit, cheu, fuit!*), of his racing stud at Ecouen, and of the grand new château which he was building on the site of the gray old ruin, dating from the time of the Crusades which the Marquis his ancestor had left him in Languedoc. A French gentleman has little reverence for his ancestral home—when



he happens to possess one. He would call Knole or Alnwick *une vieille maison*; and his idea of a château is a grand new gimcrack building of five stories high, in the approved Boulevard style, with Mansard windows, and a flowery iron railing, ornamented with gold all round.

He paused for lack of breath while he enumerated his possessions; and I took the liberty of asking him why the deuce he lived, when he came to town, in such a squalid quarter as Soho, and in such an abominable hole as the Hôtel de la Crapule. With the inimitable French smirk, and the unrivalled French shrug, he replied,

*'Que voulez-vous, mon cher? on est chez soi.'*

*'Chez vous!'* I repeated indignantly. 'You are a gentleman, and when you are at home you live like one. That gargote in which I found you—we were old friends, and I could take liberties with him—'is not fit for a washerwoman's apprentice, or for a commercial traveller in the cough-lozenges line. Why don't you go to the Clarendon, to Mivart's, or to Long's?'

*'Des tombeaux! quoi?'*—mausoleums, family vaults, Volney's *Ruins of Empires*, my dear,' he pleaded. 'I care not for reigning grand-dukes or dethroned sovereigns, or Siamese ambassadors; and the American millionaire—he always goes to the family-vault hotel, because it is so dear—distresses me. I like to see life. I am Ulysses. I have seen ruins and cities.' Carabas was not vainer than most Frenchmen; nay, I fancy that he was less conceited than are the majority of the race.

'Well,' I resumed, *'mettons que je n'ai rien dit.'* There's the Charing-cross, the Langham, the Grosvenor. They're cosmopolitan enough for you, aren't they?'

'I detest the Grand Hotel,' quoth Carabas. He spoke English very fluently: thus I need not imitate in French the diction of Mr. Alfred Wigan in the *First Night*. 'I like not the Grand Staircase, the Grand Waiter, and the Grand Boots. I like to be *chez moi*, *et je trouve mon petit confort dans le Soho.*'

*Dans le Soho!* yes; and precisely as the Imaginary Carabas expressed it, there are thousands of French people, gentle and simple, who come to England every year, and find their *petit confort* in the Hôtel de la Crapule, and in congenial holes and corners. You waste your time in arguing with them. Coming from abroad with a French travelling companion, I have sometimes coerced him in a friendly manner, when he arrived sleepy and scarcely convalescent from sea-sickness, and have carried him off, bag and baggage, to one of our new and palatial hotels. In vain! I could not run down to Manchester or Liverpool for a couple of days but that, returning, I found that my friend had disappeared; and it might be reckoned upon with tolerable certainty that he would turn up again in Soupemaigre-street and at the Hôtel de la Crapule.



The worst of it is that when, being abroad, you may happen to be introduced to an intelligent French gentleman, and you ask him whether he has ever been in England, he will reply, '*Mais certainement, Monsieur; mais Londres! ah, qu'elle est triste cette enorme ville de fumée et de brouillard.* How I ennuyer myself there! What narrow dirty streets! What a population of *canaille!* How dear and bad the hotel! *Pour apprendre à vivre, il faut habiter Paris.*' And if you pursue your investigations farther, it is ten to one you will discover that your intelligent acquaintance's sojourn in Perfidious Albion, and in the metropolis thereof, was limited to three weeks, three-fourths of which he spent in Soupemaigre-street and in the Hôtel de la Crapule.

Half-a-dozen streets, differing very slightly from that surnamed of the Thin Soup, surround the centre of this dingy cobweb, Grenouille-square. There is Passepartout-place; there are Epinard-street, Chauvesouris-street, Mauvaiselarge-street, Chinapan-court, and Bagne-buildings. A wonderful alien population do these streets harbour. The strangers within our gates in this district of Imaginary London may be divided into two grandly distinctive sections: the exiles and the voluntary denizens. First let us take a glance at the banished. They are, as I have already hinted, of every shade of politics; and for their especial political benefit the newsvendors' shops of the vicinity exhibit side by side with *London Journals*, *Bow Bells*, and *Police News*, copies of the *Gaulois*, the *Figaro*, and the *Journal de Paris*, together with clever, infamous caricatures for and against the Empire, the Orleans and the Thiers party, but, in the majority of instances, in favour of the Commune. This is but sensible, since there is a good deal of petroleum lying perdu about Grenouille-square. See, from that cookshop—I beg pardon, that *café restaurant*—in Passepartout-place, where he has just partaken of a frugal meal, consisting of two pennyworth of *bouillon*, half a lettuce, and a huge hunk of a specially light and sour bread manufactured by the banished bakers of Soho—is Citizen Aristide Sangueteau, *ouvrier bronziste* and ex-member of the Commune de Paris. 'Death to tyrants!' 'Execution of hostages!' 'Abolition of capital!' 'Equal distribution of property!' are written plainly in the citizen's face. Stay: something else is legible there—Short Commons. He has done a tolerable amount of mischief in his time, this red-hot patriot. He fought at the barricades in February and in June '48, and in December '51. He has grown gray in rebellion, and wrinkled in sedition; but it must be admitted that the citizen's couch has not been altogether a bed of roses. *Il a payé de sa personne.* He has been flung into Mazas, into the Conciergerie, into La Roquette—into fifty prisons. He got that halt in his gait through lying so many weeks, heavily fettered, in the hold of the transport in which he was conveyed from the convict prison at Tou-

lon to the convict settlement at Cayenne. He has toiled in the chain-gang at Nouka Hiva. He had the fever in New Caledonia. He was half-killed under the stripes of the penal bastinado in an Algerian gaol. He got his rheumatism in a dungeon at Mont St. Michel. He has been wounded half-a-dozen times. That scar across his face was from a cut of a dragoon's sabre; he lost two fingers of his left hand through a shot from a gendarme's pistol. This is the man who has lain so long in the gyves, who has been delivered over to the tormentors so many, many times, merely because he had a craze in his head about Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, and all that rubbish. His old father died broken-hearted not long since in the Hospital of Lariboisière. One of his sisters is in Charenton, stark staring mad. Another—she was on the town, because she had not any bread—was tried lately before the Versailles Court-Martial as a *pétroleuse*. Aristide has a brother who is a prisoner on board a *ponton* at Brest. Is it very much to be wondered at that Citizen Sangueteau has got rather distraught as to his political convictions, and that when the last social upheaving in France took place, he should have come down in somewhat of a volcanic and red-hot-lava fashion upon society, as those of old did who came out of the tombs 'exceeding fierce'? Well, he and his fellows played the very devil in Paris the other day; and Citizen Aristide was fortunate enough to escape by the skin of his teeth: else a very short shrift need he have expected from the Marquis de Gallifet and the Versailles troops. He is banished: as it would seem, hopelessly; and he is hungry; and likely to be so, I should say, for a very long time. There is not much work for bronze-workers in London. Don't let us say anything more about this Citizen Sangueteau, swathed as he is in the very densest of clouds. Pass on; but perhaps you may be able to pity the man a little. He has had, and is having, rather a rough time of it.

There are plenty of Polish exiles in Soupemaigre-street and its purlieus: the veterans of the ostracised colony dating from so far back as the rebellion of 1831; but their ranks are perpetually renewed. Political discontent has been chronic in the fair land of Poland, since she has been trod by the hoof of the ruthless invader and might; and when there is not an insurrection in that unhappy country there is at least a conspiracy, so that the exile contingent in Soho seldom lacks recruits. The Slavons bear their banishment with tolerable equanimity. They are a handy shifty race; they can generally speak half-a-dozen languages in addition to their own; and are generally ingenious enough to be able to pick up a decent livelihood. Many of their number keep shops; many of them make money. Moreover, they are a placable, easy-going race, and agree equally well with their German and their English neighbours in Soho. It is by no means an uncommon occurrence for Miss Smith,



the linendraper and hosier's daughter of Soupemaigre-street, to be united in the bonds of matrimony to Stanislas Ladislas Czwjzkowski, so long a respected lodger in the top attic of her papa's house, where he earned an honest living by carving fan-mounts. And, in most cases, a very good husband does Stanislas Ladislas make to the fair English maiden of Soho.

The Italian exiles, with the exception of some inveterate Mazzinians, or Garibaldians, too patriotic to live under the constitutional government of Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy, have happily disappeared; and of German and Spanish exiles there are none at all. Still Soupemaigre-street and its surroundings contain a dense swarm of resident foreigners of almost every race under the sun, Jews excepted. The Israelites shun Soupemaigre-street: there is nothing to be got out of it. Nobody wants to sell old clothes. They wear them. There is no use in establishing a ghetto within a ghetto, and the resident strangers are in the aggregate as sharp as Petticoat-lane and Holywell-street rolled into one. It is poverty—it is the long necessity for clutching at every morsel of bread which comes their way—that has made their wits so keen. When they cannot obtain sustenance from work done outside the limits of Soho, I fancy that, like the rats behind a well-stopped skirting-board, they must live upon one another. But they do live somehow, and prosper—sometimes.

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## THE IRISH COURT

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HAVING an occasion of business with a country cousin, who had placed his family in lodgings near Merriion-square, I called at the street-door one morning, at an hour too early for ceremony. My knock was promptly answered by a rustic servant, who was also an importation from home, and who—knowing my intimacy with the household—ushered me, abruptly and without notice, into the drawing-room.

The sight which there met my eyes was striking and uncommon. *Materfamilias*, a portly dame, stood erect in a majestic attitude under the gas-lustre, curtseying and smiling graciously but gravely at one of her daughters. The stately condescension of her manner seemed a little exaggerated towards her own child, who on her part, however, seemed in no degree less ceremonious, but swept across the carpet, salaaming at every stride, and keeping her full front assiduously turned to the matron, just as the young May moon may be observed to *envisage* the full-blown orb of day. The evolution was one of some difficulty, for the fair damsel's waist was encircled in an enormous counterpane, which trailed at great length along the floor. I would have fancied that she had been making an unwelcome visit to the kitchen, and that the cook, according to ancient usage, had surreptitiously fastened a 'dishelout to her tail;' but the size and weight of this appendage forbade such a surmise; and, moreover, it was evident that she was not unconscious of the encumbrance, for whilst she moved, with her eyes still fixed deferentially upon the mistress of the ceremonies in the middle of the room, her right heel, 'insidiously aside,' employed itself in kicking the quilt away to a respectful distance, lest, being twisted about her limbs, it might impede the freedom of their course.

Another blooming creature, similarly equipped with what seemed an under-blanket, stood at the opposite end of the room near a window, waiting apparently for her turn to take up the same ground; and the younger olive-plants, raised upon chairs by the wall in mute admiration, contemplated the whole proceeding through mouths and eyes opened to the widest stretch of both. Having heard in my younger days of Catalani and her shawl-dance, it occurred to me that this might be a modern adaptation of that movement to an envelope of another and more familiar denomination. 'Who knows,' quoth I wittily to myself, 'but they may be doing Sir Roger de Coverley in a new figure?'

So profoundly were the party absorbed in the ceremonial, that I was able to take in the whole of it before the charming Dorabella (we called her Dolly in Tipperary), finding her retreat cut short by a sudden collision with my shins, uttered a little shriek, and then, bursting into a wild fit of laughter, appealed by an eloquent glance to her mother to explain the situation.

The matron did not accept the intrusion quite as pleasantly as her daughter.

'Didn't I tell you, Mick Rafferty,' she said, turning wrathfully upon the page, 'that I wasn't at home to gentlemen any day before three o'clock, and never to ladies, till you got orders to put on your button-jacket and wash your face?'

The state of Mick's complexion was certainly *prima-facie* evidence that he had not been authorised to admit a *lady* that morning; and I am bound to record that it wanted a good hour and a half of the time appointed for the other sex. He pleaded, however, that there was 'a differ between a gentleman and a neighbour; and he thought Mr. Connor' (that's me) 'was free of the house and welcome to run in and out at all hours,' as he knew me to do at Castle Brody.

'It was my fault, my dear Mrs. Brody,' I exclaimed, willing to excuse the stammering youth, notwithstanding the invidious distinction he had drawn between me and a gentleman proper; 'I rushed past my old friend Mike, after my thoughtless fashion, without taking time to recollect that you are a town lady now. But as I am here, allow me to ask, what new kind of drill is this at which I find you employed?'

Mrs. Brody was (and is, I am happy to say) a cheerful, good-tempered woman, with no light perception of the ridiculous; and her brow being quickly smoothed of the angry wrinkle which had contracted it, she too broke into a hearty laugh.

'Why then, Rody Connor,' she said, 'since you must know, I may as well tell you that the girls and myself are laid out to be presented at the *Drawing-room* to-morrow evening, and I am just putting them through their facings. This drill, as you say, is called kicking out the train.'

'Kicking out the train!' I cried in my ignorance; 'what, in the name of whatever is courtly, is that, Mrs. Brody?'

'You must understand,' explained the matron, 'that a lady has to appear in Dublin Castle the same as at the Queen's Court, in full-dress, with as good as two yards of a tail dragging after her over the carpet, into the room where the Lady Lift'nant stands to receive her company. But, my dear, that's not the worst of it. There is a circle, as they call it, in that room, only it is in the shape of a half-moon, drawn up on each side of her Ex-sellency, composed of the Lord Chancellor and his wife, the Primate and his



lady, Judges and judgesses to no end, my Lord Bishop this and my Lady Bishop that, with the Dean of St. Patrick's, all the grandees and little-ees who have the privilege of the *ongthreë*. There they stand one and all, winking and tittering among themselves, and staring at every young woman who passes in at one door and out of the other.'

'A most trying ordeal,' I remarked. 'I wish my young friends here safely over it.'

'And what should hinder them, I'd like to know?' replied the lady, bridling. 'They can do it as well as another, I suppose. What did they learn dancing and deportment for, if they'd be afraid to walk across the floor of the biggest room in Ireland?'

'My life on Miss Dorabella, at all events,' said I. 'After the stone wall she rode over at Coolairy, show me the bishop, or the bishop's wife either, that can stop her.'

'Ah, but this is another pace altogether, Mr. Connor,' interjected the subject of my praise. 'I'd sooner face the Pound at Ballinasloe on Mad Bess than carry the two yards of muslin ma was telling you of out of that room.'

'Ay, that is the rub,' pursued the matron; 'for when the gentleman at the door has spread out your train for you at the end of his stick, making it as wide as a peacock's tail, anybody might walk up to her Ex-sellency, or for that matter to her Majesty, with dignity and composure; but to get out of that and vanish through the opposite door without once showing your back to the *presence*, or your profile to the *circle*, and at the same time not to tear off your skirt bodily, or else trip up your own heels—that is what I call the rub. It is not natural, but it must be done; like many other unnatural things that people must do, who are determined to take a lead in this world.'

'I now understand,' said I, 'why young ladies preparing for that presence must be instructed how to kick out their trains; and such was the exercise at which you were engaged when I so unseasonably broke in upon you.'

'Yes, that was our *mancœuvre*,' said the stirring dame; 'and now, with your leave, we will finish the lesson. You'll find Mr. Brody, if you want him, going through his sword-exercise in some of the passages below.'

Miss Leonora (vernacularly Nelly), whose turn had come, was tightening the blanket round her slender waist, when I was thus politely dismissed. Before my departure, however, it was gently signified that knowledge acquired by surprise, as I had obtained it, was not fairly current in society, and I had no difficulty in promising an honourable reticence. From that day to this I have not made the affair a subject of private tattle or gossip. If I now relate it, it is in the performance of a public duty, to which considerations



of mere personal obligation must, of course, give way. In our new and improved morality, family secrets are not to stand in the way, when they can be brought out to the aid of a great policy; nor can Mrs. Brody complain of broken faith, if after an interval of a dozen years her daughter's *pas en arriere* is drawn into the light to 'adorn a tale.'

The reader will not be sorry to hear that I have very lately seen the same young lady, nothing the worse for her Castle experience, but much more becomingly girdled with a neat white apron, out of which she and her two little girls were dispensing oats, with no sparing hands, to the poultry in the farmyard attached to her husband's parsonage. When I hinted that I had once seen her differently accoutred, she laughed, and said: 'What a goose I was then, to be sure, to think that I was going to be a fine lady all at once, because nothing would satisfy poor dear mamma but that I must be brought out at Court!'

It was some time before I made out my friend Brody in an area beyond the kitchen. He was hastily unbuckling himself from a sword nearly four feet in length, with which he had been strutting and fretting his hour, to acquire the art of carrying such an appendage, so that it should not come between his legs before the vice-regal nobility. He also was rehearsing for the Drawing-room, and being a short fat man, and scant of breath, the exertion had brought a more than usual amount of redness into his face. His speech also was hurried and stammering, whilst he tried to laugh at himself—a most unsuccessful haw-haw, I must add—for playing the fool at his time of life.

'But you know, my friend,' said he, 'when the ladies take a thing into their heads there is no resisting them; and the mistress here will have it that the girls are nothing till they "come out." So we must leave our comfortable home, and pack ourselves into expensive lodgings in Dublin, that the world, seeing that they appear at the *Cassle*, may understand they are something.'

'And what do you expect them to gain by going to the Castle?' I took the liberty of asking.

'A bill for feathers and *guippure*, if you know what that is—I don't—that would clothe the whole family decently for a twelve-month.'

'What!—no more than that?'

'O, yes, a great deal more. There is the chance of making the acquaintance of half-a-dozen young swells, who will lounge all the morning on your sofas, eat your dinners and drink your wine *ad libitum* every evening if you ask them, and accompany the young ladies to theatres and concerts as often as you accommodate them with free tickets. In the rear of these advantages halts the forlorn hope of an astonishing or impossible marriage with a scion (the

French, with greater propriety, would style him a *rejeton*) of "The Ten Thousand," not worth a thousand brass farthings; and the connection is to counterbalance all the bother and expense of making your daughter and yourself the envy of the Barony of Eliogarty.'

'If that be the value you set upon the speculation,' I asked him, 'how is it that you take a personal share in it, tying yourself on to that toasting-iron and masquerading in point-lace, ruffles, and a silk cocked-hat? You must be aware that you look more of a gentleman—ay, and feel it too, from the crown of your head to the sole of your foot—in your tweed jacket and clouted brodekins.'

'Wait till you are married, my fine fellow, and have a nursery full of girls. Then you will understand the reason why. Would you have me let them go to the *Cassle* by themselves? No; I must first go to the Levee to qualify myself for admission into better company, and then attend my wife and "the Misses Brody" to the Drawing-room. I bless my stars the first part of the programme is past and gone; for I appeared at the Levee yesterday.'

'O, then,' I said, 'yours was really that little round body which I saw in a covered car on Cork-hill, panting inside an over-tight doublet of brown poplin. You reminded me of a soldier-crab who has outgrown its shell, and strains every muscle to burst through it into the cool air and liberty.'

'Upon my word, you are complimentary,' replied Mr. Brody; 'but them was my feelings undoubtedly, however you managed to decipher them. An excruciating yoke it was, and most expensive. For though I did not go the length of buying a Court-dress out and out—which Heaven forbid!—the hire of one was equal to an entire *shoot* of broadcloth, which you could for ever after call your own. And when the clothes were hired, they were—as you sharply observed—too tight in every way for a man of my girth. I declare I felt like a lunatic in a strait-waistcoat all the time they were on my back, to say nothing of the continual dread of bursting out of them, which would, of course, have doubled the cost, to say nothing about the exposure.'

'Well,' I remarked, 'that must have been distressing in itself, and adverse besides to the ease and freedom which are so essential to the proper carriage of a gentleman.'

'Indeed and you may say that,' answered Mr. Brody, 'whether you are in jest or not. Mighty awkward it was, I assure *you*. But what was all that to the trouble my nether garment was to me when my turn came to make a bow to the Lord Lift'nant!'

'What!—you don't say there was danger of a rent there also?'

'That same was on the cards,' he continued. 'It might; but it didn't. Every other sense of danger, however, went clean out of my mind, in the confusion of the moment, when, bending forward to perform my obeisance, a glimpse of my lower members deprived



me of all recollection. In haste, whilst dressing, I had surveyed my figure superficially in the glass. It was nothing to boast of, that shadow of a "bare forked animal," which there confronted me. But I had no leisure to dwell on the reflection; for Manus O'Brien, who was joined with me in the expense of the car, was singing out in the street, and bringing all the neighbours to the windows with his asseverations that "the Voiceragal Coort was waitin' for us." Scarcely allowing myself time, therefore, to bring buckle and tongue together, I bounded into the vehicle, and what between Manus's gabble and the novelty of the situation, I forgot, long before we passed the Cassle-gate, what manner of man I was. I hope there is no irreverence in the expression. No wonder afterwards if, in the flare and the excitement of *the presence*, the sight left my eyes at the second view of my infaryor man. A horrible fancy seized me that I had forgotten the most matarial covering of all, and come away in my drawers. "Good gracious!" says I, "what made me go laive mee throwers beehind?" His Ex-selleney and suite indulged in an audible titter at this original remark. Small blame to them for that. I laughed myself afterwards till I cried again; and the mistress had like to be choked with a spoonful of soup, when I told her of it at dinner. But the disthress at the moment was littlerally *inexpressible*. How I did envy a major of Highlanders who was advancing towards the spot, which I made haste to evacuate!—how I envied his fillibeg!—and what would I not have given to be a parson, like Jemmy Martin our curate, who had just passed through the room, with his *cossack* so convaniently let down all round, that he was able to roll up his trowsers knickerbockerwise, and make believe that he wore shorts and knee-buckles.'

'Ah! that is one of the many advantages enjoyed by the Church,' I said; 'but military men also are, in this matter as in most others, highly favoured beyond civilians. They find it easier and less costly than any other class to pay their court to the great, while their costume is incomparably more becoming.'

'O, yes,' Mr. Brody answered, 'I see that now. Indeed, I was made sensible of it yesterday, when young Cassidy from Ballinamuck, the brewer's son, swaggered about like a field-marshal, and he only a full ensign in the Myo Maleetia. But if Mrs. B. insists on another saison at Court, I'll manage to figure as a soldier myself.'

'Is it as a *Light Bob* you mean?' I saucily inquired.

'That will depend upon the company, sir,' my friend gravely answered, and in rather a severe tone of voice. 'I may have a commission in the Ossory Rifles for asking, and that would entitle me to face the Queen's representative in a tunic and continuations, like a Christian. But now I ask *you*, Rody Connor, as a friend, if a man's wife wears the smallclothes at home, does that circumstance

give her a right to put her husband into such an apology for them as she sent me out with yesterday ?

It is a delicate matter to tender an opinion, even when pressed to do so, on subjects matrimonial. I therefore dodged my friend's question, and in a general way commended his idea of joining the defenders of his country, though it were for no better reason than that he might enjoy the privilege of wearing his trousers at the *Cassle*. As there is no competitive examination for the militia service, nor any impertinent inquiries about spelling to be satisfied at Chelsea, there seemed no doubt that his interest with the county authorities might easily procure for him such a distinction.

M. P.

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### NOT FOR LOVE

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EDITH was fair indeed, and I was free ;  
But that which had been was not so to be—  
My heart awoke, and Edith smiled on me ;

But not for love.

In winter deep I dreamt of summer shine,  
And all my hopes were false as they were fine.

And I was happy then as I might be.  
Warm spring had painted every field and tree ;  
And Edith sang sweet ditties unto me ;

But not for love.

And I had looked upon her budded youth  
As on a book of innocence and truth.

And knowing not of poison in the wine,  
I said, ' And may I link my life with thine ?'  
She whispered, ' Yes,' and placed her hand in mine ;

But not for love.

And I lay in a sweet swoon of delight,  
And thought it daytime in the depth of night.

'Twas coming soon, too soon, when I should keep  
My days in darkness and my eyes from sleep ;  
When Edith, without sorrowing, should weep,

And not for love.

O that a maid should sigh upon her glove,  
And mimic fondness where there is no love !

GUY ROSLYN.







*John Proctor, del.*

*J. R. Batt*



## BESSIE AND I

IN TWO PARTS

### I.

ENJOY'D your dinner, have you, my boy? Well, come, that's jolly, you know,

Though I wish that Bessie had been here too—she's longing to see you so. Here, bring your chair to the fire, old man, and don't be afraid o' the wine; And we'll have a quiet weed, if you like, and a chat on 'auld lang syne.'

So 'tis seven years since you went away, and I have been married five: What! you thought I 'hadn't the cheek' to propose to a girl? Why, man alive,

'Tis the strangest, most delightful thing that ever happen'd, you see: I didn't 'pop the question' at all. 'Twas Bessie proposed to me!

Here, Edie and Sid, you may run off now, and have a game o' play; Come, you know what mamma was to bring you home, if you be good children to-day:

Your uncle and I have a lot o' things that we want to talk about; And you shall come in again, my dears, when we've had our gossip out.

And now for my tale, though I hardly know what Bessie would say if she knew—

By Jove, how she'll open her eyes when she comes to be introduced to you! As I told you, she's spending the day with a friend—her cousin, by the bye—

Who's just been obeying the old command, to increase and multiply.

Well, you know what our prospects were, old man—our mother's, and Kate's, and mine—

When you bade us good-bye to go to sea in the navy-doctoring line; With the mother's pension and jointure, you know, she was pretty well off, and then

We thought I was sure to make my mark, what with the bar and the pen.

I remember how you laugh'd at my rhymes, you unbelieving Jew, And used to rout me out from my books to go and idle with you; But the mother and Kate believed in me, as our foolish woman-folks will, And Bessie dubb'd me her laureate, and knight of the gray goose-quill.

You know what Bessie was as a child, in the dear old bygone days,  
With her big brown eyes and golden head and her pretty wilful ways ;  
How she plagued, and charm'd, and queen'd it o'er us youngsters oft  
and oft,

Yet what a dear little heart it was, how clinging, and tender, and soft !

Her brother Willie and I were 'old particulars,' bear in mind,  
And the good old rector and his wife were always hearty and kind ;  
So that hardly a day would pass away but I found myself, you see,  
In the quaint old garden with Bessie and Will, and who so happy as we ?

Heigho ! they were pleasant times, old man,—fresh, and hopeful, and  
true,

Ere the foot of Time had trampled and soil'd the sheen of life's morn-  
ing dew !

When I think of those garden walks and pranks what tender memories rise,  
With Bessie the centre figure of all, with her merry, mischievous eyes !

Well, I went to Heidelberg, as you know, to finish my school career,  
In that quaint old home of spectacled lore, meerschaums, and läger-beer ;  
And when I came back, my child-playmate had vanish'd, and in her place  
Was a fair girl-woman, shy and sweet, with a gentle, winsome face.

And I loved her, I loved her—God knows how well !—from her first  
shy welcoming glance,

With a passion as strong, and tender, and pure, as the love of old Ro-  
mance :

And she ?—she was always pleasant and kind with the friend of her  
childhood gay,

But whether my darling loved me or no was more than I could say.

Willie and Kate were engaged, you know, and they'd look so conscious  
and shy,

That we used to tease and banter them both, his sister Bessie and I ;  
And when they'd begin to whisper and sigh, I couldn't do less, you'll own,  
Than draw sweet Bessie away with me, and leave the lovers alone.

We were out in the fields one summer's eve—how well I remember it  
still !—

And somehow we two had wander'd away from love-lorn Katie and Will,  
Till we came in the dusk to the lone black mere, where the aspen  
branches wave,

And she coax'd me to tell her its legend grim of a love beyond the grave.

Then I look'd down into her soft brown eyes, with their witching and  
lustrous spell,

And I whisper'd, ' Dear, I've another tale that I should like to tell !'



When we heard a merry shout from behind, and up came Willie and  
Kate,  
And the loving words died out on my lips, and I knew my story must  
wait.

But she seem'd from that very time to grow more shy and distant, you  
see :

I never could meet her out alone, or tempt her to walk with me ;  
And when I tried to draw her aside to whisper a loving word  
She'd flush and tremble, and flutter away, like a pretty frighten'd bird.

I saw she shunn'd me, and said to myself, with a proud and passionate  
throe,

'She loves me not, and would spare us both the pain of telling me so ;  
And I'd rather, God knows, that my heart should break, in its silence  
bitter and drear,

Than I'd pester a woman with whispers and vows that she doesn't care  
to hear !'

So I put away all my hopes of love, and settled gloomily down  
To the dreary study of the law, in my chambers up in town :  
I left the lover's tender rôle for the sterner Roman's part,  
And thought to live my passion down, and root it out of my heart.

But in vain, in vain ; for while my eyes were bent on the musty page  
My truant thoughts would wander away to the pleasant parsonage,  
And in fancy I'd see her winsome face—too winsome and fair to tell—  
With the soft, shy look in her lustrous eyes that I knew too well, too  
well !

Yet I kept to my work with a dogged heart that naught could conquer  
or tame ;

'Since love is denied me,' I bitterly said, 'I'll make myself a name.'  
I was up with the first faint streak of dawn, with pallid and haggard looks,  
And midnight found me with aching head still bending over my books.

And you know the end !—how a mist would clog my bloodshot waking  
eyes,

And circles quiver about the lights in dazzling rainbow dyes :  
Then a strange dim blur of letters and lines, and then—all darkness  
there !

And a poor blind man upon his knees, in an agony of prayer.

O Jack, dear brother ! 'twas hard—'twas hard ! so young in sorrow and  
strife,

To be left a sightless burden, old man, for all my useless life !

Never to see the sun or the flowers, nor the starry heavens above,  
Nor look in the dear home-faces again, so full of pity and love !

I know that Katie wrote to you, lad ; but she couldn't tell, dear heart,  
Of her soothing words, and patient help, and tender sisterly part ;  
Nor how the dear old mother would say, while her pitying tears would  
fall,

‘ Poor boy, his home must be always here : there's more than enough  
for all !’

But I must be a burden on them, I knew, as I bitterly felt at times,  
And by and by I took again to weaving stories and rhymes ;  
And Katie would write them out for me, and somehow they seem'd to  
‘ take,’

For I did my poor best, Heaven knows, for hers and the mother's sake.

And quiet and peace at last came down, in gracious answer to prayer ;  
The chastening Hand that had dealt the blow help'd the mourner to  
bear ;

And I came to think, with a heart resign'd, of even the brief love-dream  
That had brighten'd and blighted my bygone life with its fickle and  
fleeting gleam.

I seldom saw her—Bessie, I mean—for the wound would rankle still,  
But I'd hear of her almost every day from either Katie or Will ;  
And when they talk'd of a legacy that had left her rich, you know,  
My broken prayers went up to God for her happiness below.

But it chanced, as I sat and brooded alone, one summer's afternoon—  
By the pleasant warmth and the scent o' the flowers I knew it was ‘ leafy  
June’—

Kate came and coax'd me to take her arm, and walk out with her, to call  
At the rectory-house, or our friends would think I'd quite forgotten  
them all.

And Bessie was there ! I could not see her winsome, welcoming face,  
But the very sense of her presence seem'd to glorify the place ;  
And I trembled and flush'd in the foolish way that lovers understand,  
At the gentle sound of her pitying voice, and the touch of her dainty  
hand !

We sat in the quaint oak parlour—ah, how well I knew it of old !—  
And the good old rector prosed away about his church and his fold,  
The parish schools, and the state of the roads, and the probable price  
of hay,

Till Bessie at last jump'd up from her chair, in her old impulsive way.



'Come, who's for my summer-house?' she said; 'for it is so hot in here!

What! none of you speak? Then Charlie here shall be my cavalier.

Mamma dear, where is that magazine? O, here it is, I see:

I want to read him the poem, you know, that so delighted me!

Then she took my arm and led me out, with a tender sisterly care,  
To the dear old garden, so dark to me, to her so blooming and fair,  
Till we came to the arbour, the scene of some of my happiest hours o'  
life,

Ere I'd put from my heart its crowning hope of calling her my wife.

'Twas Tennyson's last new poem she read, and it may have been very  
fine,

But somehow her sweet voice trembled so much, I could hardly follow  
a line;

And at last she gave it up with a sigh, and laid the book away.

'I think it must be the heat,' she said, 'but I cannot read to-day!'

Then there came a pause—a dreamy pause—when in fancy I could see  
The fair flush'd face of the gentle friend so full of pity for me:

Then she laid her dainty hand on mine—her hand that trembled so!

And the tears were in her tender voice as she whisper'd soft and low:

'Charlie, we two are such old, old friends, that you mustn't think me  
bold

If I ask you to tell me a secret that else would ever be untold!

—What was it you wanted to say to me that evening by the mere?

Come, I'm sure you'll tell me, won't you, now? for I should so like to  
hear!

What! you dare not tell me, you say!—ah, well, I think I can guess!—

And, Charlie dear, I'm sure you know my answer would have been "Yes!"

You know I loved you, without the need of either promise or vow;

And yet—how cruel! how cruel!—you thought I should turn away  
from you now!

Now, when your poor dark life has need of a tender and trusty guide;

Now, when I'm prouder of your love than of aught in the world beside:

And *did* you think that this was the time I should choose to coldly part?

Ah, 'tis little indeed you men can know of the depths of a woman's heart!

Charlie, don't think me unwomanly, dear—unwomanly and weak—

Because I give a voice to the love I know you would never speak!

'Tis better so than that both our lives should be forlorn and lone;

And so,—if you care to have me, dear,—you may take me for your own!

What need to tell of my answer, Jack,—of my heart's ecstatic bliss,—  
As my lips sought hers, and we seal'd our love with a first warm pas-  
sionate kiss?

While my silent thanks went up to God on the Jacob's Ladder of  
prayer,—

The God who had brighten'd my life with a joy that seem'd too great  
to bear!

## II.

AND so we were married—Bessie and I—and every hour of my life  
I'd cause to bless the happy day that brought me my darling wife :  
Such a true and tender helpmeet, she—so patient, and ready, and kind,  
She almost made me think at times 'twas a blessing to be blind!

She came with gold in her hand, sweet wife ; but God knows that, far  
above

The home and the wealth she brought, I prized the richer wealth of  
her love ;

And she tried to persuade me that I help'd to pay our way, you see,  
By the stories and rhymings, grave and gay, she loved to scribble for  
me.

And children were born to us,—first, a girl, who'd her mother's eyes,  
they said :

'Twas then that I wept my saddest tears since Bessie and I were wed ;  
For when they laid the wee mite in my arms, and spoke of its baby  
grace,

I felt it hard I should never look in my little darling's face ;

That I never in all the years to come her gentle face should see,  
Ne'er look in her laughing baby eyes as I danced her on my knee ;  
Nor mark, as the happy years roll'd on, each varying change and mood,—  
The baby pranks, and the childish grace, and the blush of maidenhood.

Then our boy was born, and my life stood still, with a sudden horror  
and fright !—

O Jack, old man, shall I ever forget that trying awesome night,  
When I paced this room here, through and through, with a groping,  
helpless dread,

While my darling's precious life up-stairs was hanging on a thread?

But God heard my prayers—the blind man's prayers—and spared her  
to me, my sweet,

And our home grew merry with cradle songs and the patter of little feet ;  
With the patter of little baby feet, that would toddle up to my chair,  
To lay a little soft head on my knee, that loved to nestle there.



So the years pass'd on, and even life now often seem'd hard to me ;  
But when I sat in the eventide, with my little ones on my knee,  
While Bessie would sing us some quaint old song of love or of doughty  
deed,  
I'd think how good and pleasant it was to the life I had thought to lead.

Let's see, 'tis a twelvemonth ago since first I noticed, with strange  
surprise,  
That the darkness seem'd to grow lighter like at times to my poor  
blind eyes,  
And a yearning, passionate, trembling hope crept into my heart and  
brain ;  
But never a word I said to the wife, lest my thoughts should be false  
and vain :

Never a word I said to my love, lest her heart should be overcast,  
To know I had cherish'd a hope like this, to find it a myth at last ;  
But I quietly told my story to Will, as we saunter'd up and down  
The garden, and we two thought of a plan for getting me up to town.

Then I spoke to the wife of a book I'd plann'd, that I fancied would  
answer well,  
But I wanted some talk with a firm in town, to see if they thought  
'twould sell ;  
And Willie had promised to go with me and see me through it, I said,  
For I knew that she couldn't leave the bairns, or I'd like her to go instead.

She tried to persuade me from it at first, and dolefully prophesied  
All sorts of accidents and mishaps, and then she pleaded and tried  
To get me to take her with us too ; but at last we settled it right,  
And Willie was pledged again and again not to trust me out of his sight.

So we went to town for a week or so, and you'll easily understand  
My fluttering hopes, and doubts, and fears, now the test was near at  
hand :

Enough, that one wondrous day, Saul-like, the scales dropp'd off from  
my sight,  
And I fainted in Willie's brotherly arms, in a sudden burst o' light !

I was dazed and giddy-like for a while, but I soon got round again ;  
And O, the grateful, passionate joy that throbb'd in my every vein !  
Dear God, what a happy world it was—how winsome and fair to see !—  
The very stones of the London streets seem'd beautiful to me !

And deep, deep down in my heart of hearts there nestled this crowning  
bliss :

'O, what will *she* feel, my Bessie, my love, when she comes to hear of this ?

O the tears of joy, O the clasping arms, O the bonnie head on my breast,  
When I come to tell her the glorious news, my beautiful, my best !'

We sat far into that happy night, I and dear old Will—

Ah, the rose-like spell of those rich deep hours is a fragrant memory  
still !—

And we talk'd of the dear ones down at home, and the story we had  
to tell,

And the wondrous love of the Master above, who 'doeth all things well.'

We spoke of Bessie again and again, and always with moisten'd eyes,  
And we felt 'twould be best to spare my love too sudden a glad sur-  
prise ;

So I was to keep on my old blue 'specs' by way of a loving ruse,  
And to patiently bide the fitting time for gently breaking the news.

You can easily guess what my feelings were when I got back home at  
last ;

And how, as I trod on the threshold here, my heart beat thick and fast ;  
And how I had nearly told her all in a burst o' passionate bliss,  
As my darling flew to welcome me home with a loving clasp and kiss.

Dear heart, 'twas the same sweet bonnie face, nay bonnier than before,  
With the old soft charm in the lustrous eyes that had won my heart  
of yore !

Sweet eyes, that were moist with tender tears, that it went to my heart  
to see :

God knows that I never knew till then the depths of her love for me !

She put my hat and my stick away, and with tender and wifely care  
Led me, who seem'd so helpless and dark, to my old accustom'd chair ;  
And there she left me a minute or so, with a kiss and a gentle word,  
While she ran to bring the children down ; and my heart was strangely  
stirr'd

As I look'd about at the pleasant room, and out on the garden view,  
That all seem'd so familiarly strange, so old, and yet so new ;  
And I dropp'd back into my chair once more, with a longing akin to  
pain,

As I heard the children come skurrying down to welcome me home again.

O Jack, there are times and feelings, old man, that language can never  
paint ;

And words, when I speak of that crowning scene, seem weak, and feeble,  
and faint,—

Feeble indeed to show one tithe of my bosom's passionate swell ;  
But I daresay you can picture it all far better than words could tell.



I could scarcely see them at first for the tears that dimm'd my yearning sight,

As they ran to meet me, with eager joy, my younglings bonnie and bright;  
And then they clamber'd up on my knees, with merry welcoming cries,  
And I look'd for the first time in my life in my little darlings' eyes!

And what did I see? A wee girl-face, bright, and eager, and fair,  
With her mother's lips, and lustrous eyes, and ripple of golden hair,  
And a darling rogue of a baby-boy with merry black eyes; and, ah,  
They both were pleading with lips and eyes for 'A story, a story, papa!'

'What sort of a story, my dears?' I said; 'a fairy story, eh?  
Well, come, as you've been good children, I hear, I must humour you to-day:

Once on a time, in a beautiful wood there lived a fairy, you know;  
I couldn't tell you the year, of course, but 'tis ever so long ago.

And all the people they loved her so, this fairy in the wood,  
For she never was cross and proud, my dears, but kind, and gentle,  
and good;

And she always was happiest when she'd made some neighbour happy  
and bright—

Unlike some little children I know, who tease, and quarrel, and fight!

Not you, my dear? Why, of course not, child! Did you fancy I  
should suppose

That Edie and Sid would ever do such naughty things as those?  
'Tis only bad little boys and girls that plague, and quarrel, and shout;  
But now for this beautiful fairy, dears, I was telling you about.

What was she like? Why, Edie child, what a little plague you are!  
Well, I fancy—I only fancy, you know—she was something like mamma:  
She'd nice brown eyes, and—let me think—yes, beautiful golden hair;  
And her face was quite a treat to see, it look'd so pleasant and fair.

Now in this wood a hermit dwelt, in a cottage lone and poor;  
He was blind, like poor papa, my dears, and his heart was heavy and  
sore,

Till the fairy found him out one day, as he sat in his lonely cot,  
And thought, 'Poor man, I must do my best to brighten and cheer his  
lot!'

So she'd come and chat, and tell him the news, till he grew quite merry  
and bright,

And she gave him all that she could—food, gold, and everything but  
sight;

And she brought little children to play with him—such nice little children, miss—  
And he'd hear their prattle and tell them tales, and pull their ears—  
like this !

Well, the fairy had a brother, my dears, who was quite a giant, 'tis said,  
And could do, O my, such wonderful things when he took it into his head ;  
And when his fairy sister was out on an errand of good one day,  
He went alone to the blind man's hut, and gently led him away.

He led him away to a secret cave, where a mighty genii dwells,  
And with curious bottles, and drugs, and books, works wonderful cures  
and spells ;  
And he touch'd the man with his magic wand on his poor, dark, sight-  
less eyes,  
And he saw—O the joy !—he saw again the beautiful fields and skies !

He was cured, my dears—he was blind no more ; and he thought, with  
a happy smile,  
“ I won't let her know it all at once, but keep it secret awhile ; ”  
For the dearest thought of his heart was this, “ How glad the fairy  
will be,  
And what fun I shall have with the children now when they come to  
play with me ! ”

Well, he found the fairy waiting at home, and she started up from her  
chair,  
With her face all flush'd and eager-like, as mamma's is over there ;  
And she press'd her hands, as mamma does now, to her throbbing  
brow, just here—  
Why, Bessie, my darling, what is it now ? how you frighten a fellow,  
dear !

For, ah, she had read my story right, and was sobbing on my breast,  
With her arms about the children and me, my fairy bonnie and blest ;  
And I clasp'd her to my heart of hearts, while my brimming eyes  
o'erran—  
The truest helpmeet, the sweetest wife, God ever gave to man !

I told her all as she lay on my breast, hand lovingly clasp'd in hand,  
And then the dear children had to be kiss'd, and made to understand ;  
And I had to tell who Edie was like, with her mother's eyes, dear heart,  
And whether little Syddie was not my very counterpart !

And of course I had to be taken out around our little demesne,  
Where all its beauties were pointed out and admired again and again ;



then, in the midst of a merry laugh or a lightly-utter'd jest,  
Bessie would quite break down again, and be weeping on my breast !

of the—hem ! why there she is !—that's her knock, as sure as a  
gun !

you take your cue from me, old man, and I'll show you a little fun :  
sie, my dear, this gentleman here is a very old friend of mine—  
Smith, Mrs. C. ; Mrs. C., Mr. Smith—in the briefless-barrister line !

ha ! why, where is your memory, dear ? As the singers say, “ Try  
back.”

you quite forgotten our old playmate, the illustrious Dr. Jack ?  
o ! what now ? Well, upon my word, this really is a surprise !—  
ng another fellow, by Jove, under my very eyes !

look at her now, old man—there's a picture for you, eh ?  
, she's getting younger, and rosier, and handsomer every day !  
e, get us some tea, there's a dear good girl, and don't stand laugh-  
ing there,  
we'll make it a jolly meeting to-night, with Dr. Jack in the chair !'

EDWIN COLLIER.

## COLLEGE SCOUTS

BY ONE OF THEMSELVES

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How vast is the difference between the present position of an Oxford scout and that which the members of that 'profession' occupied even as little as twenty—much more two hundred—years ago! I cannot say exactly what the habits, perquisites, pay, and private feelings of my predecessors were as long ago as the last-named interval, but I strongly suspect that they were far from enjoying anything like the good places which old fellows like myself can recollect as our once valued possession, and our now (alas!) departed glory. Probably the artist—I think Mr. Cuthbert Bede—was not far from the truth, who sketched an imaginary dialogue between an undergraduate and his servant of that period as follows:

'The pasty which your honour left part of at breakfast, I will serve up an your honour pleaseth at supper-time.'

'I thank thee, Peter, it pleaseth me hugely.'

All that kind of thing had disappeared when I entered on my duties—and privileges—first as scout's boy, afterwards, a few years later, as dignified with the title of scout in Durham College, Oxford. I was the son of a scout, and my father, also the son of a scout, had been as long familiar with the walls of Durham College, and the portraits of the worthies which adorned its hall, as the warden himself. In fact, as with the Egyptians in Herodotus, of whom I have heard my masters speak, among whom a cook brought up his son to be a cook, a fisherman to be a fisherman, and so on, the scouts had for generations in Oxford brought up their sons to what they instinctively found to be an easy way of earning a livelihood, that was becoming yearly more profitable, although I'll take very good care I don't bring up any son of mine to the noble profession. But my family had been for generations scouts of Durham College, Oxford, and in my early days there can be no doubt that my father was quite right to bring me up to his own line of business. Common-room man, porter, manciple indeed! Call it promotion to be put into any of those places? I always found that those worthies thought a good deal of themselves, and were rather given to look down upon us scouts as inferior beings. We could slap our pockets, and pocket with a good grace whatever little affronts might come from such a quarter. As to the cooks, their perquisites and profits were *not* to be looked down upon; but we could only envy them, as their education was of a totally different



kind from ours; and whereas our profits came principally from leavings and other little matters, which came under the general name of 'perquisites,' theirs came from sources to which I can only look up with respectful admiration. That their places were for the most part really worth having, is shown by such facts as the following. Our cook had come to us from a larger college, in which he had held that much-envied situation with both profit and approbation for some years past; but on their proposal to put him on a fixed salary of 300*l.* a year with no profits and pickings, he offered himself and his services to our fellows directly he heard that old Higgs had retired into private life. They knew, from frequent visits to the high table at the college he was then serving, that he could send up as good a dinner as any cook in the university; that he could scallop oysters to perfection; that he knew to a turn when a wild-duck was done; and that no one could come near him in grilling a blade-bone or a turkey's drumstick. We thought in those good old days no little about such qualifications for the office of cook, and scarcely less as to social qualities and general ability to be useful and pleasant in elections to our fellowships. On one occasion when a fellowship was thrown open, there being no candidate in our own college qualified according to the statutes (which had not then been knocked on the head by any University Commission), Watkins of St. Botolph's came in for it. Down went old Davison, our senior fellow, to St. Botolph's to make inquiries about him, just when he knew that a lot of the St. Botolph's fellows would be in the common-room looking at the morning papers. 'Watkins fit for it?' was the surprised question of the assembly—they always prided themselves on being rather intellectual at St. Botolph's, though in reality they liked good living with its *et ceteras* as well as any senior men in the university—'why, of course he is. Didn't he take a first-class?' 'Perhaps so,' was the cool reply of the imperturbable old Davison; 'but at Durham we don't want merely a first-class man. We want at Durham a man who can make himself useful at dinner and agreeable after dinner. Now, can Watkins carve a goose and play a rubber?' And on a proper voucher for these two qualifications, which, with all their intellectuality, the St. Botolph's men didn't undervalue any more than did we at Durham, Davison snuffled out *suo more* (I've picked up some Latin too), 'Well, then, good-morning; as he took a first-class into the bargain, I think I shall vote for him.' Watkins got the fellowship. Davison was a character in his way, as perhaps you've found out from the above. On another occasion of a college election—not that he despised ability, though he hated priggishness—he said, in reference to a new light of the school of 'advanced thinkers,' 'I'd as soon vote for my walking-stick as for one of your intellectuals.'

All this may appear to be a digression, but it is not so. I wish

to show the principle on which appointments to office were made in our college. They were always made in reference to certain special qualifications. I, for instance, should certainly not have got my place *merely* because I was my father's son—and that fact *did* tell in my appointment—had I not possessed other special recommendations. But when I entered on the scene of college life, my father was growing old, and as old Davison found that I had taken kindly to some special avocations for which he had always been noted, Davison made a point of getting me appointed my father's permanent deputy when he became past actual work, and his successor when he died. Not but what my father would often willingly come up to the old place, after he had given up work, to help me; that is to say, to take the direction of everything upon himself, if I had a breakfast party on, or a luncheon, or a supper, especially if the entertainer was old Davison, for he and my father were mutually favourites of each other. The said Mr. Davison used to declare that my father could brew better cup, flip, bishop, punch, and drinks generally, whether festive or cooling, than any common-room man in Oxford; and he was not far wrong either. And accordingly he generally preferred the beverage of my father in these matters to any that our common-room could send out. And it was my proficiency in these matters, joined of course to unimpeachable honesty and unassailable respectability, that secured me his patronage. Honesty and respectability, indeed!—and in a scout?—I hear some wise-acre say. Yes, most certainly. Let me tell you that most of us bring up our families as respectably, and with as much regard to truth and honesty, as any of our betters. As to honesty, of course there are those who call it dishonest to take any perquisite whatever, however usual or allowable; but any master of the most ordinary liberality would never blame his servant or consider him grasping for taking his fair, customary, and recognised perquisites. I am sure, for instance, that neither my father nor myself would ever have dreamed of appropriating an uncut pigeon-pie after a breakfast party, unless our master had said we might take it, as a generous master would not unfrequently do, on finding that we kept an eye open to his interest as well as our own. And we never thought of touching the remains of a breakfast commons of bread, which, with a commons of cheese and a radish or two or a little water-cress, would make a good lunch for many of our masters, without any unnecessary increase of bread batells. It's quite as much by little things of this kind that batell bills run high as by any actual extravagance. And if we treat our masters in this sort of way, it's wonderful to see the sort of friendly feeling that springs up between us and them; and then who is it that they inquire for first of all, years afterwards, when they come up to the old place? Why, the Edward Miller, or John Harris, or William Peasley, or Ted Vickers, who



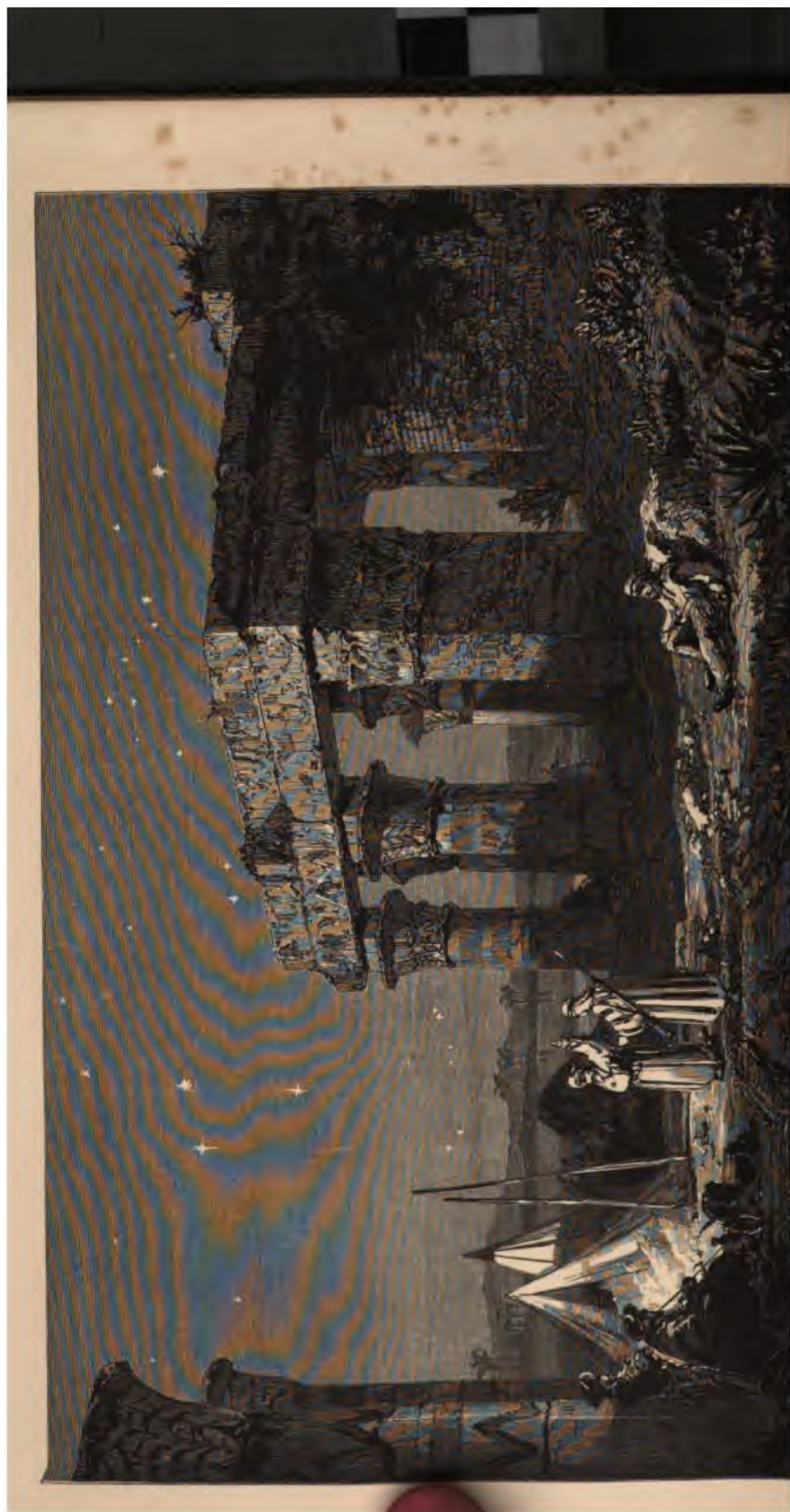
used to wait on them when they were undergraduates, to be sure. I know I felt very proud one day, when three of my old masters walked into college in the middle of the Long and batelled for some lunch in their own names, that I was able to offer them a bottle of claret to drink my health in, as I waited on them. And they were not ashamed to take it either, for they knew I meant it and was glad to give it them. Of course there are bad as well as good servants, and I've known some cool and shameful things done by them. I remember a servant one day—I'll call him James—whom his master caught doing an outrageous thing. His master came in one day from afternoon chapel a little earlier than James expected, and found James just putting away his decanters in the cheffoniere, having poured out for himself a glass of port and a glass of sherry, which were standing on the table. On being asked what he meant by it, he very coolly said, 'Why, the fact is, sir, that I felt rather sick, sir, and—I meant to have told you of it, sir—but I took the liberty of taking a glass of your wine, sir.' Very likely he meant to have told his master, 'over one of my shoulders, and I won't say which,' as Miss Moucher says; and the said master, with the remark that, if he felt sick, a mixture of port and sherry was hardly likely to do him good, let him carry off the two glasses of wine, like a good-natured fool as he was. And I also knew a scout in St. Boniface whom his master, a fellow of the college, coming up one day unexpectedly in the middle of the Long, found entertaining a party of friends in his room. And one day the afore-mentioned James, of happy memory, had the coolness to lend the room of one of his masters, an M.A., during his temporary absence, to an undergraduate for a supper-party on a Saturday night during full term. The non-academical reader may not at first see the full beauty of this proceeding. James foresaw that there would probably be a little noisy singing, which might excite the notice of the warden or one of the tutors, but which, whatever remark it might occasion, would at least, as coming from the rooms of an M.A., not be liable to interruption. For this little escapade, however, James happily got the 'precious good wiggling' that he deserved. His master—the same, by the bye, whose wine he had so calmly appropriated—good-natured as he was, was no fool, and on returning from his country duty on the Monday, soon detected signs of the festivity, which all James's sharpness had been unable to remove, especially in a smell of tobacco-smoke, which, smoker as he was, he could not fail to detect to a very unusual extent. On inquiry, James acknowledged that he *had* ventured to lend the room for the purpose he had mentioned; and on finding himself fairly in the wrong box, thought he had better eat humble pie with an appetite, and, apologising very submissively, hoped that the matter would go no farther, as he was afraid that if the warden came to hear of it, he would lose his place; a result

which, to say the least, was not unlikely, for more than one complaint about James had gone up to the warden. One of James's masters on a certain occasion inflicted condign punishment on him. One day, when he had been more than usually provoking by his inattention and carelessness, one of the junior fellows, to quote James's own words, 'actually took me up, sir, by the collar of my coat, sir, and shook me, sir,' as he touchingly complained to one of his other masters, who, sympathising with the aggressor somewhat more than the victim, replied, to his discomfiture, 'And serve you right too.' And one more instance yet occurs to my mind of a still stronger measure taken by an undergraduate. Joe Stratton, the undergraduate in question, who was a general favourite, and usually as good-tempered a fellow as need be, one day fairly lost his temper with a blunder-headed fellow, who very much wanted what he then got, and having given vent to his feelings to the extent referred to, thought he had better see if he could not make a friend of Davison, and went to him open-mouthed, with 'Please, sir, I've come to say that I've been beating Meadows.' 'Well, Mr. Stratton,' said Davison, 'I don't for an instant deny that Meadows richly deserved it, and I don't doubt that you've done him a great deal of good; but it's a rash thing for you to have done, and I advise you to say nothing more about it to any one; if you don't, I sha'n't; and I only hope it won't come to the warden's ears.' But I've reason to think that Davison was so delighted with the occurrence that he told it in the common-room that same evening, to the no small delight of his brother fellows, who were all perfectly familiar with the peccadilloes of Mr. Meadows. And although the thing was in itself unjustifiable, Meadows knew so well how richly he had deserved to feel the weight of Mr. Stratton's fists, that he made no complaints, took his chaffing quietly, and was as much improved by his beating as his best friends could have desired.

Well, you'll ask, and what does all this tend to? Why, I've honestly told you all: the two ways in which college servants can be looked at, and the two or rather various kinds that can be found among us. Though bad ones are to be found in our body, we are not all bad, and I hope I shall have succeeded in convincing some of my readers who may be uninitiated in what have been recently termed 'the mysteries of Isis,' that we are, on the whole, a more single-hearted race, more unselfishly disposed, and more honest of purpose, than either the public have supposed us or books represented us to be. Our sole pursuits do not consist in perquisite-hunting for our families, punch-brewing for our masters, or beer-drinking for ourselves; and I am sure that, among college reforms, whether already effected or still contemplated, there are those which can be appropriately applied in other directions than to the farther abridgment of the already diminished privileges and perquisites of the 'College Scout.'









## WINTERING IN EGYPT

BY J. LEWIS FARLEY, AUTHOR OF 'MODERN TURKEY,' ETC.

THE land of the Khédive is likely soon to rival in greatness the ancient kingdom of the Pharaohs and the Ptolemies. Modern Egypt cannot, it is true, compare with ancient Egypt in the number of its inhabitants, for Diodorus tells us that the latter contained 30,000 towns and villages, while Herodotus says that in the reign of Amasis there were in Egypt 20,000 cities. What successive sovereigns, however, from Sesostris to the Caliphs, failed to effect, or accomplished only in part, has been completely achieved under the rule of the Khédive by the opening of the Suez Canal; while Alexandria and Cairo are fast becoming cities of palaces, and the wealth of the country itself is every day increasing.

Western prejudice attributes the present ignorance of the Mussalman population of Turkey to Islamism, and concludes that the religion of Mahomet is a bar to all human progress. Any one, however, who visited Egypt ten years ago, and could now see the vast improvements that have been, and are still being, made by the Khédive, would at once have his prejudices very much modified, if not altogether removed. He would see the harbour of Alexandria, the finest, probably, in the world, crowded with the shipping of all nations; with a new breakwater and new docks in course of completion; warehouses filled with cotton, grain, and other agricultural produce, ready for export; railways in operation or in course of construction; everywhere, in fact, the signs of increasing civilisation and prosperity. He would see Alexandria itself more like an European than an Eastern city, with its magnificent buildings and its 'Place des Consuls,' that exceeds in size and beauty any square to be found in Europe. He would see the land irrigated, by the Nile's overflow or by means of machinery, everywhere teeming with rich crops of wheat, maize, barley, beans, and peas; clover and flax; rice, sugar-cane, tobacco, and cotton; coffee, indigo, and madder; the gardens producing apricots in May; peaches, plums, apples, pears, and carobs in June; grapes, figs, and prickly pears in July; pomegranates, lemons, and dates in August; oranges in September; sweet lemons and bananas in November; and the muld Seville orange in January. In old times, we know there was no cotton in Egypt; now there is also 'cotton in Egypt,' and too, of the best description. Even six years ago there were not more than two hundred steam-ploughs at work in cotton cultiva-

tion. Every mechanical aid to production has, in fact, been made use of, and the result is an enormous increase of wealth both to the people and their ruler.

The long sea-passage has hitherto deterred many persons from visiting Egypt ; but now that the journey from Brindisi to Alexandria can be made in three days and a half, the superiority of Lower Egypt over the south of France or Italy as a winter residence will become better known and appreciated. Cairo is, *par excellence*, the most perfect Arab city of the present day, and one in which its inhabitants have, perhaps, attained to a higher degree of civilisation than in any other city in the East. The climate of Egypt is salubrious during the greater part of the year, and, in Alexandria, even the heat of summer is seldom oppressive, being tempered by a fresh northerly breeze. The Khamseen, or hot south wind, however, which prevails in April and May, is at times unpleasant ; and the inundations from the Nile render the latter part of the autumn less healthy than the summer and winter. In summer, the village of Ramléh, four miles from Alexandria, is a charming residence ; while Cairo, from its clear dry atmosphere and equable temperature, is now admitted to be one of the most desirable winter resorts for invalids in the world. The Khédive, too, who, from his immense wealth, his splendid hospitality, and liberal patronage of art, is justly entitled to be called the Haroun-al-Raschid of modern times, is fast rendering his capital as luxurious as it is interesting.

One of the principal advantages which invalids derive from a winter's residence in a favourable climate is, that they are enabled to take daily and efficient exercise in the open air. At Cairo, the invalid or tourist can be constantly in the open air, either on foot, donkey-back, horse-back, or in a carriage. The atmosphere is not subject to any sudden change, nor is there danger of vicissitudes of temperature such as are experienced in many places in the south of Europe, nor cold cutting winds such as frequently prevail during winter and spring at Nice and Naples. The complete change, too, from the habits and customs of Western Europe to those of an Eastern city like Cairo, is, I am convinced, of immense importance to valetudinarians, for impressions made upon the mind react upon the body, and the novelty of the new style of life in Egypt gradually weans one from a too-frequent thought of self. Who could think of dyspepsia or hypochondriasis while beholding the lovely sunrises and glorious sunsets which in this foggy and comparatively dismal land are never seen, or while contemplating, as at Thebes, the ruins of a civilisation that existed long before Athens and Rome were thought of, or the history of Greece had even been begun ?

The pleasantest months in the year for a residence at Cairo are December, January, February, and March. The inundations of the Nile, having subsided, leave the fields in November covered with a



fresh layer of rich deposit; then the lands are put under cultivation; and during our winter months, which are, in fact, the spring months in Egypt, the Delta, as well as the valley of the Nile, looks like a delightful garden, teeming with verdure and beautiful with the blossoms of trees and plants. It very seldom rains at Cairo, probably not more than three or four times in the year. Dr. Abbot records a few drops of rain on December 26; slight rain, January 25; heavy rain, January 30; a few drops, February 9 and 16; and a few drops, March 6 and 14. The thermometer, on the average, in the month of December, ranges from  $56^{\circ}$  to  $64^{\circ}$  at 9 A.M., and from  $68^{\circ}$  to  $77^{\circ}$  in the afternoon. In January,  $52^{\circ}$  to  $69^{\circ}$ , and  $64^{\circ}$  to  $79^{\circ}$ . In February,  $56^{\circ}$  to  $69^{\circ}$ , and  $65^{\circ}$  to  $75^{\circ}$ . In March,  $60^{\circ}$  to  $76^{\circ}$ , and  $60^{\circ}$  to  $78^{\circ}$ .

The romance of travel in Egypt is, however, fast disappearing. A new bridge has been recently built by the Khédive over the Nile, so that travellers can now go direct in carriages from their hotel to the Pyramids without being obliged, as formerly, to cross the river in boats, and finish the excursion on camels or donkeys. The old 'Dahabeah,' or Nile boat, is giving way to the comparatively luxurious Nile steamer; and the charms of that dreamy Epicurean life, floating up and down the great river, will soon become a memory of the past. No more encampments beneath the myriad stars and the wondrous sky of an Egyptian night, amidst the labyrinth of pillars, obelisks, and fallen temples of Luxor or Karnak. Instead of, as heretofore, passing the night on land under a tent, the traveller now sleeps in his comfortable berth on board the Khédive's steamer, and 'does' the Nile in three weeks instead of three months, as in the palmy days of the Dahabeahs. During the winter of 1871, before the steamers began to ply, the price asked for a first-class boat was from 90*l.* to 120*l.* a month, for three or four months; while now the voyage—585 miles—from Cairo to Philæ, a few miles above the first Cataract, and back again, can be made, by the aid of Messrs. Cook & Son, who are exclusive agents for the passenger steamers on the Nile belonging to the Khédive Administration, at a cost of 44*l.*, including steamer, living, guides, and all other necessary expenses. Of course, those who have plenty of time and money at their disposal can have no difficulty in obtaining Dahabeahs, if they prefer that mode of locomotion; but to such as are limited in these respects, the steamers will be found more convenient. The latter are small, carrying from fourteen to seventeen passengers, and stop at all the places worth seeing between Cairo and the first Cataract, viz. Beni-Swaif, Minyeh, Beni-Hassan, Syout, Girgeh, Kench, Luxor, Karnak, Esneh, Edfou, Koam-Embou, and Assuan. A day and a half is spent at Assuan and Philæ, and three days at Luxor and Karnak.

My readers would not, I am certain, thank me for a description

of Cairo, its squares, streets, mosques, and bazaars; for has not each remarkable spot in this famed Arab city been 'done' over and over again by book-making travellers of every stamp? Has not every one, too, gazed in imagination on the Sphinx, and ascended the great Pyramid, that covers an area equal to the entire of Lincoln's-inn-fields, and is one-third higher than the ball of St. Paul's? Have not the Ghawazees, or dancing-girls, of Esneh been pictured in glowing words and painted on undying canvas? and have not the wonders of Thebes, 'the city with a hundred gates,' and all the temples, colossi, sphinxes, obelisks, and tombs of Luxor, Karnak, Philæ, Syout, Abydos, and Dendera been made familiar by the works of Heeren, Lepsius, Kenrick, Wilkinson, and Gliddon? The accompanying engraving pictures a phase of Egyptian scenery which those who have visited Luxor and Karnak will not fail to recognise. My object, however, is not to describe the scenery of the Nile, but simply to direct attention to the climatic advantages of Egypt, and to Cairo, the city of the Khédive, as a suitable winter residence.

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## LORD LYTTON

'Thou takest not away, O Death !  
Thou strikest—absence perisheth,  
Indifference is no more ;  
The future brightens on our sight ;  
For on the past hath fallen a light  
That tempts us to adore.' *Wordsworth.*

'He is dead, and has left nothing in this world that resembles him.' These words, spoken by Sir Philip Francis at the close of his laudation of the elder Pitt, may fairly be applied to that great man who died on the eighteenth of January last, after a literary career extending over nearly half a century, during which he gave to the world labours more various and brilliant than were ever achieved by any writer except Voltaire ; while in the highest range of art, in the poetic and imaginative, he must be admitted to have infinitely surpassed Voltaire. With Lord Lytton expires the art of the romancer. The mantle of Sir Walter Scott, which descended directly upon him, may now enfold his quiet dust in the gray gloom of St. Edmund's Chapel ; for assuredly there is none other to assume that royal purple.

Romance writing, as an art distinct from poetry, appears to be now extinct ; and the photographic faculty, or the art of reflecting actual life exactly as it is, alone remains. There is no living writer who could create an Edgar Ravenswood, a Lucy Ashton, a Devereux, or a Zanoni ; or any one figure in that long line of images, all radiant with the light of a poetic mind. Indeed, could such a conception arise in the brain of a modern novelist, he would most likely reject the poetic image as high-flown and unnatural, not having within him the stuff wherewith to fashion to completeness such an embryo, or a fancy strong enough to give it life.

The atmosphere we breathe in the novels of Scott and Bulwer is the atmosphere of romance. Before you have read a couple of chapters you are in a new world ; yet nothing seems unreal ; the characters are living men and women, but they live in another world than ours. They are of that grander stature which the painter calls the heroic.

It is curious to consider that when Edward Lytton Bulwer first surprised the world with *Pelham*, Scott still reigned at Abbotsford,

the chief luminary of the world of letters. But two years earlier, wreck and ruin had come upon that splendid life, to be met, perhaps, more heroically than ever calamity was encountered since the days of Themistocles. The wizard of the North sat among his household gods—his oak carvings, rescued from Scottish abbeys; his coats of mail; his gothic ceilings in carton-pierre; and, knowing not how soon he might be bidden to depart from them for ever, wrote on, with cheerful unflagging zeal, eager, despite advancing years and fast-declining health, to redeem his fortunes and his honour, and wipe off a hundred thousand pounds of debt with the contents of his ink-bottle.

To Bulwer it was given never to write for daily bread. He was the ideal romancer, whose Pegasus was never goaded into labour by poverty's stinging lash. From his very boyhood he was an artist, far more consciously and deliberately artistic than Scott ever was. He was indeed, from the beginning, a thinker, which Scott was not. In Scott the creative and reproductive faculty seemed to be a God-given power, which required no cultivation—the soil fertile as those virgin cotton fields which need neither plough nor manure. In all Scott's letters and diaries there is no hint of his ever having thought of his art as an art, not the faintest indication of those laborious days and nights which Dickens—as revealed to us by Mr. Forster—appears to have given to the composition of a novel. Scott wrote as the birds sing. The art of concealing art was unnecessary to him. He had no art to conceal. With Bulwer it was otherwise. He was not content to take his genius as he found it, like Scott, but set himself sedulously to the work of self-culture. His education seems to have begun afresh when he left the University. His own words in one of the prefaces to *Pelham*, written for the edition of 1835, best describe his earnestness, and are worthy to be remembered by every writer who desires to be an artist:

'For the formation of my story I studied with no slight attention the great works of my predecessors, and attempted to derive from that study certain rules and canons to serve me as a guide; and, if some of my younger contemporaries, whom I could name, would only condescend to take the same preliminary pains that I did, I am sure that the result would be much more brilliant. It often happens to me to be consulted by persons about to attempt fiction, and I invariably find that they imagine they have only to sit down and write. They forget that art does not come by inspiration, and that the novelist, dealing constantly with contrast and effect, must, in the widest and deepest sense of the word, study to be an artist. They paint pictures for posterity without having learned to draw.'

In the same preface the author describes the reception of this his first important work—for *Falkland* can be considered only



a boyish effort—how, as in the case of *Vanity Fair*, the publisher's 'reader' 'pronounced the most unfavourable and damning opinion upon its chances of success—an opinion fortunately reversed by Mr. Ollier, the able and ingenious author of *Mesilla*, to whom it was then referred. The book was published,' continues the author, 'and I may add that for about two months it appeared in a fair way of perishing prematurely in its cradle. With the exception of two most flattering and generously-indulgent notices in the *Literary Gazette* and the *Examiner*, and a very encouraging and friendly criticism in the *Atlas*, it was received by the critics with indifference or abuse. They mistook its purport, and translated its satire literally. But about the third month it rose rapidly in the favour it has since continued to maintain.'

Towards the conclusion of the same preface he adds :

'I knew not a single critic, and scarcely a single author, when I began to write. I have never received to this day\* a single word of encouragement from any of those writers who were considered at one time the dispensers of reputation. Long after my name was not quite unknown in every other country where English literature is received, the great quarterly journals of my own disdained to recognise my existence.'

It would have been strange indeed if such a book as *Pelham* should have long failed to attract the public, however roughly handled by the critics, with their natural aversion from novelty, and innate unwillingness to recognise a new planet in the literary heaven. Surely altogether the most wonderful book ever written at three-and-twenty. The sparkle of its wit, the richness of its humour, the keen edge of its worldly wisdom, are as fresh to-day as when the story was written; and Pelham, trifler and boy as he may be, charms and delights us still. We excuse his long curls and his velvet-collar, his dancing lessons and his amours after the manner of Le Sage, for the sake of a vivacity that never tires, sustained by shrewdness and common sense that fill us with wonder at his creator's knowledge of the world and the human heart. The book overflows with good things. Every other page sparkles with an epigram. Pelham is Chesterfield put into action, but with a life and gaiety that Chesterfield never could have had. He is more French, however, than English; and one fancies the sources of his author's inspiration, at this stage, were for the most part continental. His morals, like the *mille fleurs* on his handkerchiefs, have a perfume of the Regency, and are only above the Le Sage and Fielding standard in so far as they are more aristocratic. He fights a duel with a Parisian tradesman from a somewhat quixotic idea of honour, but is not

\* 1835. He had at this time written *The Disowned*, *Devereux*, *Paul Clifford*, *Eugene Aram*, *England and the English*, *The Student*, *Pilgrims of the Rhine*, *Last Days of Pompeii*, and *Rienzi*.

above a vulgar intrigue, which involves his secret admission to a farmer's homestead, and which might have resulted in his ignominious expulsion from that temple of the British virtues.

That critics were not indulgent to this modern Lord Fanny is hardly surprising. Although obviously designed to caricature the smaller vices of society, Pelham's elegant insolence is peculiarly calculated to offend the prejudices and rouse the ire of the critical mind. His placid impertinence, his contempt for 'majors in the line, royal dukes, and that sort of people,' suggested a sense of superiority in the author. The smaller tribe of critics had no favour for a writer who thought so well of himself, and whose critical powers were as much above their own as his knowledge of the world and of books was wider than their own. Bulwer was too great a power to be admitted easily into the republic of letters. But if, in the very floodtide of public favour, he complained of the neglect of the quarterlies, yet, in the words of Sainte-Beuve, writing of De Musset, 'Il a eu plus que jamais le suffrage des gens du monde, des jeunes femmes; il a mis en colère des critiques grotesques et grossiers; rien n'a manqué à sa faveur.'

For a young man entering the world, *Pelham* should be a textbook. What a profound knowledge of poor humanity is contained in the following passage!—and the book abounds with such passages:

'Why is it, by the bye, that to be pleased with oneself is the surest way of offending everybody else? If any one, male or female, an evident admirer of his or her own perfections, enter a room, how perturbed, restless, and unhappy every individual of the offender's sex instantly becomes! For them not only enjoyment but tranquillity is over, and if they could annihilate the unconscious victim of their spleen, I fully believe no Christian toleration would come in the way of that last extreme of animosity. For a coxcomb there is no mercy, for a coquette no pardon. They are, as it were, the dissenters of society; no crime is too bad to be imputed to them; they do not believe the religion of others; they set up a deity of their own vanity; all the orthodox vanities of others are offended. Then comes the bigotry—the stake, the *auto-da-fé* of scandal. What, alas, is so implacable as the rage of vanity? What so restless as its persecution? Take from a man his fortune, his house, his reputation, but flatter his vanity in each, and he will forgive you. Heap upon him benefits, fill him with blessings; but irritate his self-love, and you have made the very best man an ingrate. He will sting you if he can: you cannot blame him; you yourself have instilled the venom. This is one reason why you must not always reckon upon gratitude in conferring an obligation. It is a very high mind to which gratitude is not a painful sensation. If you wish to please, you will find it wiser to receive—solicit even



—favourites than to accord them; for the vanity of the obliger is always flattered, that of the obligé rarely.'

Or again this:

'As for me I went home, enriched with two new observations. First, that one may not speak of anything relative to a foreign country, as one would if one was a native. National censures become particular affronts.

'Secondly, that those who know mankind in theory seldom know it in practice; the very wisdom that conceives a rule, is accompanied with the abstraction, or the vanity, which destroys it. I mean that the philosopher of the cabinet is often too diffident to put into action his observations, or too eager for display to conceal their design. Lord Vincent values himself upon his *science du monde*. He has read much upon men, he has reflected more; he lays down aphorisms to govern or to please them. He goes into society; he is cheated by the one half, and the other half he offends. The sage in the cabinet is but a fool in the salon; and the most consummate men of the world are those who have considered the least on it.'

Here is another little bit, in a letter from Lady Frances:

'I could not help being amused at a book written the other day, which professes to give an accurate description of good society. Not knowing what to make us say in English, the author has made us talk nothing but French. I have often wondered what common people think of us, since in their novels they always affect to portray us so different from themselves. I am very much afraid we are in all things exactly like them, except in being more simple and unaffected. The higher the rank, indeed, the less pretence, because there is less to pretend to. This is the chief reason why our manners are better than low persons': ours are more natural, because they imitate no one else; theirs are affected, because they think to imitate ours; and what is evidently borrowed becomes vulgar. Original affectation is sometimes good ton; imitated affectation, always bad.'

Considered as a story, pure and simple, *Pelham* is full of power; and coming upon the world as it did in the period of Sir Walter Scott's decline, must have been a revelation. It was the Byronic school reduced to prose, and acclimatised to Berkeley-square. Read for the first time, or re-read after a lapse of years, it quickens the pulse and stirs the blood of the most *blasé* novel-reader.

Sir Reginald Glanville, when first he appears before us, with his dog, his cloak, and his tendency to fling himself upon the ground and weep floods of tears, has, perhaps, something of a *rococo* air; but this impression vanishes at once when we see him in action, and there are no scenes in the whole range of dramatic fiction finer than those in which he appears; no episode in any romance more thrillingly pathetic than his brief record of his guilty and fatal love. Modelled upon, or at any rate recalling, Byron's *Giaour*, it stands unmatched

in modern prose composition, condensing into one vivid chapter material for a three-volume novel.

What can be finer than that brief dialogue in which the avenger reveals himself to his victim, when our interest is heightened to fever point by the mystery which surrounds them, and we, as yet, know not the wrong which has inspired that deadly hate?

‘Just as Tyrrell was leaving the room, Warburton put his hand upon his shoulder. “Stay,” said he, “I am going your way, and will accompany you.” He turned round to Thornton (who was already talking with the Marquis), as he said this, and waved his hand, as if to prevent his following; the next moment Tyrrell and himself had left the room.

‘I could not now remain longer. I felt a feverish restlessness which impelled me onwards. I quitted the *salon*, and was on the *escalier* before the gamesters had descended. Warburton was, indeed, but a few steps before me; the stairs were but very dimly lighted by one expiring lamp; he did not turn round to see me, and was probably too much engrossed to hear me.

“You may yet have a favourable reverse,” said he to Tyrrell.

“Impossible!” replied the latter, in a tone of such deep anguish that it thrilled me to the very heart. “I am an utter beggar; I have nothing in the world. I have no expectation but to starve.”

‘While he was saying this, I perceived by the faint and uncertain light that Warburton’s hand was raised to his own countenance.

“Have you no hope—no spot wherein to look for comfort? Is beggary your absolute and only possible resource from famine?” he replied, in a low suppressed tone.

‘At that moment we were just descending into the courtyard. Warburton was but one step behind Tyrrell. The latter made no answer; but as he passed from the dark staircase into the clear moonlight of the court, I caught a glimpse of the big tears which rolled heavily and silently down his cheeks. Warburton laid his hand upon him.

“Turn,” he cried, suddenly, “your cup is not yet full; look upon me—and remember!”

‘I pressed forward; the light shone full upon the countenance of the speaker—the dark hair was gone—my suspicions were true—I discovered at one glance the bright locks and lofty brow of Reginald Glanville. Slowly Tyrrell gazed, as if he were endeavouring to repel some terrible remembrance, which gathered, with every instant, more fearfully upon him; until, as the stern countenance of Glanville grew darker and darker in its mingled scorn and defiance, he uttered one low cry, and sank senseless on the earth.’

The murder scene, and the scene in the thieves’ sanctuary, are of the order that would be now called ‘sensational;’ but, alas, where



is the hand that could now match them? We hardly draw breath while Pelham is in that den of infamy; we feel the nameless horror of that ordeal through which the shivering wretch Dawson must pass before he can be suffered to escape into the outer world. The Alsatian scenes in the *Fortunes of Nigel*, brilliant though they are, seem tame in comparison. But there are bits in *Rob Roy*, notably the night scene in Glasgow, which have the same living power.

I have lingered on *Pelham*, because I think, taking the author's extreme youth into consideration, it is the most wonderful of all his books. There are many who, like the admirers of *Pickwick*, still cling fondly to the idea that this first novel of Lord Lytton's is his best. The stories which immediately followed fall far below this one in brightness and power; and it is not, I fancy, till the appearance of *Eugene Aram*, published four years later, which Lord Lytton himself for many years esteemed his masterpiece, that he equalled his first success. Yet to say this is to detract in no manner from the merits of the *Disowned*, *Devereux*, and *Paul Clifford*, each the work of a master-hand, and work which no other hand could have produced.

In *Eugene Aram* we have poetry, philosophy, woman's love, of that pure and self-sacrificing type dear to the poets, a tender pervading melancholy, which prepares the reader's mind for the deep tragedy of the close, and—'sensation.' The gradual discovery of the crime is a splendid specimen of that kind of writing which has since been described as 'detective literature;' but here, as in all Lord Lytton's novels, wit and humour, together with character-painting as finished as the pictures of Meissonier, relieve the gloom of the situation, and lighten the oppression that weighs upon us in the sense of impending doom.

Before the publication of *Eugene Aram*, the young Romancer had appeared in the character of a poet. His *Siamese Twins*, however, a satirical and semi-sentimental poem in Byronic metre, is somewhat unfortunate in its subject; and one regrets that so much melodious verse should have been wasted upon twin heroes whose tawny complexions, high cheek-bones, and exceptional deformity place them without the pale of the reader's sympathy. But here, in a very powerful incantation scene, we have Bulwer's first essay in the field of the supernatural—that wide and shadowy realm which had afterwards so strong a fascination for him. Here, too, we come upon a passage strikingly characteristic of one in whom the love of knowledge was ever a passion—who in the last week of his brilliant life spoke hopefully to Professor Jowett about devoting 'next summer' to a renewed study of Plato.

' O nights !—O solitudes !—what deep  
 Delight, and pure, was drank from you !  
 Ne'er from my boyhood's golden sleep,  
     Such dreams of glory grew !  
     If I could pour what I have felt,  
 O knowledge, with its burning prayer,  
 When to thy shrine my heart hath knelt ;—  
     If I could to the world declare,  
 One tithe of that which hath the power  
 To fill with speech my lonely hour ;  
 One whisper of the wondrous voices,  
 In which the unwitness'd soul rejoices ;—  
 O, if—— But, fated in their birth,  
     The firstborn of our feelings perish ;  
 And later thoughts that cling to earth,  
     Our earthly natures only cherish.  
 And if at times within the breast  
     The unseen habitant is stirr'd,  
 And chafes against its narrow rest  
     Like some imprison'd bird ;  
 Back to its sullen home, repress,  
 We curb too well the pining guest ;  
     Until, all reconciled and tamed,  
 It loves the bars which fate hath framed ;  
     Yea ! in the very face of day,  
 Content with custom'd slavery, sings,  
     And calm'd within its cage of clay,  
 Forgets its skies and folds its wings.'

To recapitulate the titles of books known to all the reading world, loved to enthusiasm by the young, and appreciated by all thoughtful minds, would be futile. Lord Lytton's historical novels alone would have sufficed to make a reputation, though they form in his career only an episode. His *Last Days of Pompeii* is now admitted to be one of the best, if not the best, among archæological romances. And he is the originator, as well as the sole master, of that new school of the supernatural in which science and a profound acquaintance with recondite sources of learning go hand in hand with the poet's romantic fancy. The oriental diableries of Beckford, the mediæval hobgoblins and white ladies of Scott, the nightmare visions of Mrs. Shelley, fade before the creations of this richer fancy. There is something that almost approaches the shadowy grandeur of inspiration in the splendour of these pictures ; and one can fancy that nervous hand may have trembled as it traced the glowing words, that sensitive organisation may have been thrilled with a mystic power, as if some influence beyond the confines of imagination, some spirit stronger than mere human fancy, had guided the Romancer's pen.

Lord Lytton's studies in the world of magic seem the natural resource of an intellect for which the vast continent of fact was too narrow a domain. Tired of the beaten tracks which his swift foot-



steps had explored from boyhood, his fancy took refuge in the hyper-torean garden of the unreal; and from researches which three hundred years ago might have achieved for him the honourable distinction of a place in the state trials, he gathered the materials for two of his most remarkable books, *Zanoni* and the *Strange Story*. How wide the distance between them, yet in both how remarkable the power, how lavish the fancy, how rich the invention! And in both how wonderful that quality which distinguished his mind from all other minds—the predominant characteristic of youthfulness! Read *A Strange Story* in ignorance of its authorship, and you would exclaim, 'This must have been written by a man of five-and-twenty.' Vigour, freshness, ardour, vivacity, brighten every page, give life to the personages, charm to the style, strength to the story. One might suppose the metaphysical argument (which here and there somewhat weighs down the story as a story, but which was necessary to the elucidation of the author's purpose) to have been supplied by some older hand—some grave sage, like the Dr. Faber of the story, looking over the pages, and interpolating them with the results of half-a-century's reading, while the young romancer gave the reins to his bright fancy and revelled in the wildness of his undisciplined imagination. Margrave himself, in the childlike intensity of his animal nature, could not be younger or more exuberant than Lord Lytton appears in this book. And yet in hard and obscure study alone had he found the Medea whose baths and potions renewed his intellectual youth. Indeed, for him Pallas Athenæ was always doing the work of Medea.

In *Zanoni*, written nearly twenty years earlier, there is more pathos but less power. That dweller on the threshold, whose appalling form looms on us even through the mists of childhood, is not so great a conception as Margrave, the revived sensualist, beautiful as Nature herself, and as remorseless. Nor is the grandest scene in the earlier novel equal to that sublime picture on the Australian downs where the rush of the storm-driven cattle annihilates the last hope of the dying necromancer. But the heroine of *Zanoni* is a sweeter creation than the somewhat nerveless and invertebrate Lilian of the *Strange Story*. Viola is poetry itself, and her love for the mystic sage is the sweetest, purest passion that ever poet imagined. In *Zanoni* we have Lord Lytton, as a poet, at his best. This, I take it, is the poetic period. And to this period belong *Ernest Maltravers*, with its sequel, a story savouring something of the Goethe school; *Night and Morning*; and that darker romance *Lucretia*, in which the author approaches, in the sublimity of horror, nearer to the altitude of the Greek dramatists than any other modern writer, in his highest flight, has ever reached. But, great as he appears as the master of the supernatural school, the best, the freshest, the purest, and most perfect of all his books is, perhaps, that in which, forsaking for a while

the fertile field of romance where he had gathered such rich harvests, he entered the calmer domain of home life, and in the maturity of his intellect and the full flush of his power, created for himself a new style and won a new reputation.\*

The *Caxtons* is Bulwer's *magnum opus*. The plot is simplicity itself, but there is, at least, one scene of rare dramatic power. The characters possess hardly the charm of perfect novelty, for they remind us of familiar figures, drawn by a master-hand, yet they surpass the older types, both in moral beauty and intellectual variety, and are matchless among the creations of modern writers. Augustine Caxton may bear some family likeness to Mr. Shandy, but, besides a wealth of erudition, and a happiness of illustration beyond the compass of the latter, he possesses all those higher qualities and nobler attributes which Mr. Shandy needed to make him a creditable acquaintance or a desirable companion. That in this book the great novelist permitted himself to coquet a little with the Muse of his famous predecessor, there seems hardly room for doubt. His own remarks upon Sterne, in his admirable essay *On Style*, are appropriate here :

'I know not if any of his contemporaries, mighty prose writers though they were, had, on the whole, so subtle and fine a perception of the various capacities of our language as the author of *Tristram Shandy*. With what finger, how light and how strong, he flies over the keys of the instrument ! What delicate elegance he can extract from words the most colloquial and vulgate ! and again, with some word unfamiliar and strange, how abruptly he strikes on the universal chords of laughter ! He can play with the massive weights of our language as a juggler plays with his airy balls. In an age when other grand writers were squaring their periods by rule and compass, he flings forth his jocund sentences loose and at random ; now up towards the stars, now down into puddles ; yet how they shine when they soar, and how lightly rebound when they fall ! But I should have small respect for the critic who advised the youthful author to emulate the style of Sterne. Only writers the most practised could safely venture an occasional, restrained, imitation of his frolicsome zoneless graces.'

The author of the *Caxtons* never descends to puddles. The atmosphere of this book is pure as the ether of that new world to which its hero goes in quest of fortune. What a change since *Pelham* ! Instead of the young man's knowledge of the world, we have the maturer mind, with its deep insight, its profound mastery of the human heart. Instead of the varnished graces of a Hervey or a Chesterfield, we have the soul of chivalry inspiring the modest acts and quiet words of English gentlemen—a life the most su-

\* 'Je dirai du talent vrai, comme on l'a dit de l'amour, que c'est un grand recommenceur.'—*Sainte-Beuve*.



premiere Christian that fiction has ever embodied. If *Pelham* be a text-book for the worldling, a chart whereby the drawing-room navigator may avoid the rocks and shoals of society's shallow ocean, the *Cartons* is assuredly a gospel for the mind which has holier aspirations than worldly success—a lantern to light the way to the stars.

The mass of information, the vast extent of reading, revealed with a lavish carelessness, as it were unconsciously, in the book-worm's rambling talk, must surely surprise even the most enlightened reader. Yet, despite his learning, the scholar is never dull. His graceful easy diction, his quiet humour, his humanitarianism, shed their gentle light on subjects the most obscure, upon illustrations the most recondite. One would entreat him to go on talking, to talk for ever. The temptation to skip hardly assails the most frivolous reader. We are almost as fond of the book at fifteen as we are at thirty; for passion and tenderness and profoundest pathos go hand in hand with its erudition. We feel its poetry before we can appreciate the perfection of its style.

Here is a little scene of subtle pathos. The middle-aged scholar hears, after the lapse of half a lifetime, of his first love:

'When I had told all, and given him the kind messages with which I had been charged by husband and wife, he smiled faintly; and then, shading his face with his hand, he seemed to muse, not cheerfully, perhaps, for I heard him sigh once or twice.

"And Ellinor," said he at last, without looking up; "Lady Ellinor, I mean—she is very, very—"

"Very what, sir?"

"Very handsome still?"

"Handsome; yes, handsome, certainly! But I thought more of her manner than her face. And then Fanny, Miss Fanny, is so young!"

"Ah!" said my father, murmuring in Greek the celebrated lines of which Pope's translation is familiar to us all:

"Like leaves on trees the race of man is found,  
Now green in youth, now withering on the ground."

"Well, so they wish to see me. Did Ellinor, Lady Ellinor, say that, or her—her husband?"

"Her husband, certainly. Lady Ellinor rather implied than said it."

"We shall see," said my father. "Open the window, this room is stifling."

'I opened the window, which looked on the Strand. The noise, the voices, the trampling feet, the rolling wheels, became doubly audible. My father leant out for some moments, and I stood by his side. He turned to me with a serene face.

"Every ant on the hill," said he, "carries its load, and its home is but made by the burden that it bears. How happy am I! How I should bless God! How light my burden! How secure my home!"

'My mother came in as he ceased. He went up to her, put his arm round her waist, and kissed her. Such caresses with him had not lost their tender charm by custom. My mother's brow, before somewhat ruffled, grew smooth on the instant. Yet she lifted her eyes to his in soft surprise.

"I was but thinking," said my father apologetically, "how much I owed you, and how much I love you!"'

Here is a bit that must be familiar to all who know and love the book. Mr. Caxton has been talking of books as medicine for the mind, and prescribing the peculiar studies beneficial in different mental diseases:

"But," continued my father more gravely, "when some one sorrow, that is yet reparable, gets hold of your mind like a monomania—when you think, because Heaven has denied you this or that, on which you had set your heart, that all your life must be a blank—O, then, diet yourself well on biography, the biography of good and great men. See how little a space one sorrow really makes in life. See scarce a page, perhaps, given to some grief similar to your own; and how triumphantly the life sails on beyond it! You thought the wing was broken. Tut, tut! it was but a bruised feather! See what life leaves behind it when all is done!—a summary of positive facts far out of the region of sorrow and suffering, linking themselves with the being of the world."

This again, from one of the father's letters to his son:

'A full mind is the true Pantheism, *plena Jovis*. Wherever there is knowledge, there is God. It is only in some corner of the brain which we leave empty, that vice can obtain a lodging.'

Hardly anything in the literature of fiction is more touching than that story of Roland and his prodigal son: the battered old captain setting forth in the early morning to tramp the streets of London till night-fall, in the hope of meeting his benighted boy; the patient grief, the heroic resignation when all seems to be ended; the sublime passion in the scene of meeting at the roadside inn.

After the force and passion of that superb scene, how perfect the pathos of its conclusion!

"It is nothing," said Roland feebly, as he leant heavily on my arm, while I turned back my head with all the bitterness of that reproach which filled my heart, speaking in the eyes that sought *him* whose place should have been where mine now was. And O, thank heaven, thank heaven! the look was not in vain. In the same moment the son was at the father's knees.



"O, pardon, pardon! Wretch, lost wretch though I be, I bow my head to the curse. Let it fall—but on me, and on me only—not on your own heart too!"

"Fanny burst into tears, sobbing out, "Forgive him, as I do."

"Roland did not heed her.

"He thinks that the heart was not shattered before the curse could come," he said, in a voice so weak as to be scarcely audible. Then raising his eyes to heaven, his lips moved as if he prayed inly. Pansing, he stretched his hands over his son's head, and averting his face, said, "I revoke the curse. Pray to thy God for pardon."

"Perhaps not daring to trust himself farther, he then made a violent effort and hurried from the room.

"We followed silently. When we gained the end of the passage, the door of the room we had left closed with a sullen jar.

"As the sound smote on my ear, with it came so terrible a sense of the solitude upon which that door had closed—so keen and quick an apprehension of some fearful impulse, suggested by passions so fierce, to a condition so forlorn—that instinctively I stopped, and then hurried back to the chamber. The lock of the door having been previously forced, there was no barrier to oppose my entrance. I advanced, and beheld a spectacle of such agony as can only be conceived by those who have looked on the grief which takes no fortitude from reason, no consolation from conscience—the grief which tells us what would be the earth were man abandoned to his passions, and the CHANCE of the atheist reigned alone in the merciless heavens. Pride humbled to the dust; ambition shivered into fragments; love (or the passion mistaken for it) blasted into ashes; life, at the first onset, bereaved of its holiest ties, forsaken by its truest guide; shame that writhed for revenge, and remorse that knew not prayer—all, all blended, yet distinct, were in that awful spectacle of the guilty son.

"And I had told but twenty years, and my heart had been melted in the tender sunshine of a happy home, and I had loved this boy as a stranger, and, lo! he was Roland's son.

"I forgot all else, looking upon that anguish; and I threw myself on the ground by the form that writhed there, and, folding my arms round the breast which in vain repelled me, I whispered, "Comfort, comfort; life is long. You shall redeem the past, you shall efface the stain, and your father shall bless you yet."

One more quotation, taken almost at random, and I have done:

"Know thyself," said the old philosophy. "Improve thyself," saith the new. The great object of the Sojourner in Time is not to waste all his passions and gifts on the things external that he must leave behind; that which he cultivates within is all that he can carry into the Eternal Progress. We are here but as school-boys, whose life begins where school ends; and the battles are

fought with our rivals, and the toys that we shared with our play-mates, and the names that we carved, high or low, on the wall, above our desks—will they so much bestead us hereafter? As new fates crowd upon us, can they more than pass through the memory with a smile or a sigh? Look back to thy schooldays, and answer.'

Of *My Novel*, justly deemed by some critics Lord Lytton's masterpiece—with its vast variety of subject and character—and of the later romance, *What will he do with it?*—happy in all except the eccentricity of its title, I forbear to speak. They have each the power and freshness which grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength—the perennial youthfulness which became brighter as his mind matured with advancing years. Sign of flagging there was none. *The Parisians* is as fresh and sparkling as anything he ever wrote, and abounds in bits so distinctly Bulwerian, that it is hard to imagine any true student of the great artist could read a single chapter without recognising the well-known pencil.

Here is a description of a successful financier :

'He has the genius of riches, and knocks off a million as a poet does an ode, by the force of inspiration. . . . Cræsus consulted the Delphic Oracle. Duplessis was not alive in the time of Cræsus, or Cræsus would have consulted Duplessis.'

Who, except Lord Lytton, could have written the following?—

'Romance in youth is, if rightly understood, the happiest nutriment of wisdom in after-years; but I would never invite any one to look upon the romance of youth as a thing

"To case in periods, and embalm in ink."

*Enfant*, have you need of a publisher to create romance? Is it not in yourself? Do not imagine that genius requires for its enjoyment the scratch of the pen and the types of the printer. Do not suppose that the poet, the *romancier*, is most poetic, most romantic, when he is striving, struggling, labouring, to check the rush of his ideas, and materialise the images which visit him as souls into such tangible likenesses of flesh and blood, that the highest compliment a reader can bestow on them is, to say that they are life-like? No: the poet's real delight is not in the mechanism of composing; the best part of that delight is in the sympathies he has established with innumerable modifications of life and form, and art and nature—sympathies which are often found equally keen in those who have not the same gift of language. The poet is but the interpreter. What of? Truths in the hearts of others. He utters what they feel. Is the joy in the utterance? Nay, it is in the feeling itself.'

As a dramatic writer Lord Lytton's claims are of the highest. His plays are more popular on the provincial stage than those of any modern dramatist. They rank side by side with the favourite plays



of Shakespeare, and are, in most cases, more certain to draw a full house. Where is the juvenile actress—unknown, perhaps, to metropolitan fame, but famous in her particular sphere—whose Pauline is not her strong point? where the stage-stricken youth whose highest aspiration is not to play Claude Melnotte? The successful revival of *Money* is only one among a hundred indications of the comedy's enduring popularity. Revive *Richelieu* to-morrow, with Mr. Irving as the Cardinal, and all London will flock to see the finest historical drama that has been written since Shakespeare adapted history to the stage of the Globe. Only last May, Lord Lytton witnessed the performance of *Money*, at the beginning of its second 'run.' If the actors and actresses of the Prince of Wales's Theatre could have guessed how near that brilliant life touched on its sudden close, they would, perhaps, have been eager to crown the playwright with laurels, or the playwright's bust with a chaplet of roses, as they did at the Français when Voltaire, in the words of Horace Walpole, assisted at his own apotheosis. It is illustrative of the different genius of the two nations, that for Lord Lytton the garlands came only after death, and the votive wreaths which France would have given to him living, England laid upon his coffin. That he is the greatest writer England has known since Scott, I think none can doubt, even those to whom the works of Charles Dickens have been ever a source of most pure and complete happiness. Nor can we hope to see his place filled speedily. Kaunitz, speaking of himself, said: 'Heaven requires a hundred years to produce a mind great enough to restore a monarchy. Then it rests a hundred years. This makes me fear for the Austrian monarchy after my death.' May we not justly fear that Providence will rest a century or so before the world is enriched with another Bulwer?

Perhaps, after putting out of the question the one superlative requisite for success called genius, without which Lord Lytton could never have written *Pelham*, the chief secret of his supreme excellence lies in the fact that he, like Charles Dickens, gave to the art of novel-writing thought and labour rarely bestowed upon what is called 'light literature.' From the beginning, every book he wrote had its distinct and always exalted aim, and his thoughtful prefaces, in which he sets forth his design, are now amongst the most interesting of his writings.

But the distinctive *charm* of Lord Lytton's novels lies in their all-pervading air of romance, their spirituality—a something indefinable that lifts them out of the beaten road of every-day life. Scattered among the pages, we come, every now and then, on bits that set us thinking—thoughts and fancies that exalt; counsel that seems designed, by some prophetic power, to fit exactly our own perplexities; philosophy that supplies the peculiar remedy for our own peculiar grief. His *knowledge of the human heart* is so wide as to

embrace every phase of life, every shade of feeling. Yet, despite his profound sympathy with sorrow, despite that underlying melancholy which pervades much of his writing, he is never gloomy. A sportive wit, a genial humour, continually come to the relief of the poet's natural pensiveness. He has the richness of Young's imagery, without his gloom; the subtlety of Balzac, without his cynicism. He has some of Scott's grandest gifts, linked with a power of passionate expression and a variety of subject that Scott had not.

That Lord Lytton's fame will increase with the passage of time—as in the case of Balzac—I think there is no room for doubt. As the age grows more and more matter-of-fact, the world will turn from its newspapers and statistics with more and more fondness to those glowing pages which open the gates of a dreamworld; and those poetic figures which have a grace that never can grow old-fashioned will find a place in the hearts of the young as readily as when the books first came from the press; while that splendid diction, which can no more become obsolete than the language of Addison or Goldsmith, will serve as a model for a generation of writers yet unborn.

M. E. BRADDON.

NOTE.—In the noble funeral sermon recently preached, with a peculiar tenderness, by Professor Jowett, in Westminster Abbey, occurs the following passage, indicating the place which that distinguished scholar accords to the novelist's art:

'Novels exercise a wonderful influence over us, greater, probably, in the present age than ever before. They form a new element of literature which was unknown to the ancients; they not only add to the stock of harmless amusement—which is no small matter—but the novel of a great writer may justly be considered as one of the ties that bind us to one another—one of the common interests of society. They lower or elevate the taste of the nation; they enlarge our knowledge of human nature; they show the world to us in many new lights and aspects. We do not imagine that we learn anything from them, because we are always learning from them insensibly. Have not many seeds and germs of noble thoughts and actions been sown or planted in the impressionable minds of the young by works of fiction? Sometimes the novelist delights to turn out to the light the other side of society and makes the judge and the criminal change places, when regarded by the eye of the inner soul as they might be by the judgment of God. Or, again, he shows how near the best things are to the worst; how philosophy, and even philanthropy, may dwell in the breast of the villain or the murderer; for human nature is sometimes a strange compound, and a man may be equally sincere both in good and in evil. Are there not many lessons of religion and philosophy to be learnt from such creations? Or the genius of the novelist may rise up against the conventionalities and respectabilities of mankind; and some persons may fear that society will be undermined, and that it is bad for the young to read such books, which were, perhaps, written in youth. But is the truth so conveyed really different from that of the Gospel—that the Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat, but that the publicans and harlots shall enter into the kingdom of heaven before them? Or the novelist may imagine the world under new conditions, and show us—not without the aid of supernatural machinery—pure reason and pure instinct in their separate natures, now dividing, now blending; rising to heaven or sinking to earth; unable to sustain themselves, either separate or united, in an alien world. Those are mistakes who suppose that the great novelist had no other object in such works but to amuse the world, or that he did not intend the hope of life and immortality to shine through them.'



## SACRED ANIMALS

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THE worship of animals commenced at a very early period, and continues to the present moment. Sometimes representations of the animals were made of wood, stone, or metal, and these took the places of the living creatures. Such was the molten calf, which the Israelites made shortly after their departure from Egypt, where animal-worship was predominant.

Apis, the sacred bull of Memphis, and Mnevis, the sacred ox of Heliopolis, were pretended by the priests of Egypt to present to their worshippers the material form of their deity Osiris. At Memphis was erected a grand court, ornamented with figures, in which the sacred bull was kept, when exhibited to the public. Attached to it were two stables, also for its use. The festival in honour of Apis lasted seven days, on which occasion a large concourse of people assembled. The priests then led the sacred bull, preceded by a chorus of children singing hymns in his honour, in solemn procession. All persons crowded to welcome him as he passed. It was thought that children who smelt his breath were thereby gifted with the power of predicting future events. When the Apis died, certain priests, chosen for the duty, went in quest of another, who was known from the signs mentioned in the sacred books. As soon as he was found, they took him to the city of the Nile, preparatory to his removal to Memphis, where he was kept forty days. These days being completed, he was placed in a boat, with a golden cabin prepared expressly for him; and he was conducted in state upon the Nile to Memphis. The Apis was forbidden to live more than twenty-five years. Should he be alive at the end of that period, the priests led him to the sacred fountain, and drowned him with much ceremony. His body was embalmed, and a grand funeral-procession took place. When the Apis died a natural death, his obsequies were celebrated on the most magnificent scale. The burial-place of these sacred bulls was discovered a few years since by M. Marietti, near Memphis. It consists of an arched gallery hewn in the rock, about twenty feet in height and breadth, and two thousand feet in length, besides a lateral gallery. On each side is a series of recesses, every one containing a large sarcophagus of granite, in which the body of a sacred bull had been deposited. From whatever cause the death of an Apis took place, the people performed in public lamentation; and this mourning lasted until his successor had been found. They then commenced the rejoicings, which were celebrated with an enthusiasm equal to the grief exhibited during

the mourning. The people consulted the Apis as an oracle, and drew from his actions good or bad omens.

The Hindoos have, for many centuries, propitiated the bull with divine honours. Their temples are frequently situated, says Forbes, in his *Oriental Memoirs*, in the midst of the wildest scenery, surrounded by woods and forests. In these groves, a number of consecrated bulls, after being dedicated with great ceremony by the Brahmins to Siva, and having a distinguishing mark set upon them, are permitted to wander whithersoever they please, everywhere welcomed as the representatives of the god. Never was Apis regarded in ancient Egypt with more veneration than is now paid to the bull of Siva in Hindostan. Besides the living animals, there is in most temples a representation of one or more of the race, sculptured in marble or stone, reposing under the banian or peepul tree; whether living or dead, they are supposed to add to the sanctity of the holy retreats. The consecrated bulls are of extraordinary beauty. They are perfectly white, with black horns, a skin delicately soft, and eyes rivalling those of the antelope in brilliant lustre.

Among the Kytch tribe of Africans, located on the banks of the White Nile, to every herd of cattle there is a sacred bull, which is supposed to exert an influence over the prosperity of the flocks; its horns are ornamented with tufts of feathers, and frequently with small bells, and it invariably leads the great herd to pasture. On starting in the early morning from the cattle-kraal, the natives address this bull, telling it "to watch over the herd, to keep the cows from straying, and to lead them to the sweetest pastures, so that they shall give abundance of milk," &c.

The worship of the horse still seems to linger, says Ferguson, in remote parts of India; and he considers the worship of this animal as the counterpart of the worship of the bull by the Sivitas.

The horse does not appear to have been one of the sacred animals of Egypt, as no instance of its embalmed head has hitherto been discovered in any of the repositories for the bodies of the animal-divinities. The ass and the camel also have not been found there.

In India the white elephant is greatly venerated. This veneration is in some degree connected with the doctrine of the *metempsychosis*. Xara sustained seventy thousand transmigrations through various animals, and rested in the white elephant.\*

Among the North-American Indians, says Lord Minton, in his *North-west Passage by Land*, the moose is a sacred animal; and certain portions of the meat—such as the breast, liver, kidneys, and

\* A notion that the elephant was a religious animal has been held, not only in the East, but amongst several nations of antiquity. In Kircher's description of China there is a plate of an elephant worshipping the sun and moon, copied from one of the sacred pictures of the Chinese.



tongue—must be eaten at once, and the whole consumed at a single meal. Women are not allowed to taste the tongue; and all scraps are burnt, never given to the dogs. Tit-bits are cut off and cast into the fire, as offerings to the Manitou, or Great Spirit, because he had blessed their hunting; the men at the same time chanting, and beating drums and rattles.

The ancient Egyptians, seeing in the horizon a superb star, which always appeared at the time when the overflow of the Nile began, gave it the name of Sirius, because it seemed to show itself expressly in order to warn the labourer against the inundation. The dog was therefore considered as the genius of that river: they represented this god with the body of a man and the head of a dog, and gave it the name of Anabis. Its image was placed on the gate of all the temples of Egypt. From that country westward, the dog in one way or another was mingled up with the rites and ceremonies of many nations. Lucan says:

“ We receive, in Roman temples, thy Isis,  
And thy half-dog deities.”

There was a city in Egypt, named Cynopolis (now Samallout), which was built in honour of the dog. There the priests celebrated to it festivals in great pomp. Its statue was of gold; and earthly dogs, of a black-and-white colour, were ultimately sacrificed to it. These were embalmed; and now mummies of dogs are found in abundance.

In Japan, it is said that the dog still figures as a deity. Formerly the Peruvians adored this animal, and had its statue sculptured in their temples. Both Plutarch and Pliny mention a curious fable respecting a certain tribe in Ethiopia, which not only deified the dog, but had one for their king. In royal vestments, with a crown on its head, his canine majesty, seated on a throne, received the homage of its subjects. It indicated its approbation by wagging its tail; it forbade by barking; it destined to death or punishment by growling; and conferred place and dignity by licking the favourite's hand. Of course, it had its priestly interpreters, who were the persons in whose hands the real power lay.

Diodorus Siculus tells us that every one killing a cat was put to death; and that in Ptolemy's time, a cat being killed by a Roman, the natives flew to his dwelling, and that neither the fear of the Romans, who were making a league with Ptolemy, nor the influence of the princes sent to persuade them, could deliver the man from the popular rage. One of the accusations against the Templars, centuries afterwards, was that they worshipped a cat, which sometimes appeared in their chapters. One of the Sicilian Templars, when under examination, said that the cat had not appeared for a long time in the chapters, but that the ancient statutes of Damietta said that it used to appear and be worshipped.

Wolves were the sacred animals of Lycopolis. The tombs in the mountain above Lycopolis (the modern O'Sioob) contain the mummies of these animals. The ichneumon, from its enmity to serpents, was looked upon by the Egyptians with great respect; and those who held the crocodile in abhorrence greatly venerated this little creature, in consequence of its destroying the eggs of the hated animal. Those who lived about Thebes and the lake Maris, however, greatly venerated the crocodile. It was treated by them with the most marked respect, and kept at a considerable expense, being fed and attended with the most scrupulous care. They ornamented its head, neck, and feet with rings of gold and precious stones, and, after its death, its body was embalmed in a most sumptuous manner.

In the Tette district of Africa, the monkey is a sacred animal, and is never molested or killed, because the people devoutly believe that the souls of their ancestors now occupy these degraded forms, and anticipate that they themselves must sooner or later be transformed in like manner. The entellus, or sacred monkey of the Hindoos, is religiously preserved about their sacred enclosures.

Extraordinary honours were paid to the goose in ancient times; and it is still held in great veneration by some of the eastern nations. The figure that occurs so frequently on Buddhist monuments is the Brahmanee goose. The ancient Britons, according to Cæsar, held it impious to eat the flesh of geese.

The ibis was another bird held in the highest sanctity by the old Egyptians. There are still numerous pits containing ibis mummies in that country. The largest of them, a little to the westward of the pyramid of Aboutir, is about twenty feet deep. The floor of this pit, for probably a depth of many feet, is covered with heaps on heaps, and layers on layers, of coarse earthen jars, the lids cemented down, containing each the body of an ibis, preserved with bitumen, and enclosed in numerous folds of narrow cloth bandages. "Some of the mummies are found," says Lord Nugent, in his *Lands Classical and Sacred*, "in a state of great preservation—black and charred, and incapable of being taken whole out of the bandages, but all the bones, the heads, and all the feathers entire. Whether these animals were thus embalmed and brought to this place of burial whenever found dead, or whether collected here only as objects of worship, is a question of which no ancient authority assists in the solution."

Dr. Shaw states that the Mahometans have a great veneration and esteem for the stork. It is almost as sacred with them as the ibis was with the Egyptians; and they would look upon a person as profane who should kill, or even harm, one. So precious were these birds held in Thessaly, which country they are said to have cleared of serpents, that the slayer of a stork was punished



with death. They were thought much of at Rome; for when a person who, from a freak of luxury, ordered one to be placed on his dinner-table, he drew upon himself the direful obloquy of the whole city.

The robin is considered in several countries a sacred bird: to kill one is little less than sacrilege, and its eggs are free from the hand of the birdnester. It is asserted that the respect shown to it by man is joined in by the animals of the wood. The weasel and wild-cat, it is said, will neither molest it nor eat it when killed. One cause for the veneration in which it is held may be the superstition which represents it as the medium through which mankind are warned of approaching death. Before the decease of a person, a robin is believed, in many instances, to tap thrice at the window of the room in which the sick person is lying. Grimm says that the peculiar veneration with which this bird is treated has been shown by the whole German race from remote times; and he refers to the bird's colour and its name as evidences that it was sacred to Thor, the god of lightning.

The swallow, too, in Germany is everywhere deemed a sacred bird. Like the stork, it preserves the house on which it builds its nest from fire and lightning. The Spanish peasants have a tradition that it was a swallow that tried to pluck the thorns out of the crown of Christ as he hung upon the Cross; hence they have a great reverence for this bird, and will never destroy it.

In France, in the Pays de Caux, the wren is a sacred bird. To kill it, or rob its nest, is deemed an atrocity which will bring down the lightning on the culprit's dwelling. Such an act was also regarded with horror in Scotland. Robert Chambers mentions the following popular malediction upon those who rob the nest of the wren:

"Malisons, malisons mair than ten,  
That harry the lodge of Heaven's hen!"

There is an old English couplet which sings the praises of the wren and the robin:

"The robin and the wren  
By God A'mighty's cock and hen."

The whydah-bird and the water-wagtail are held sacred by the natives of several parts of Africa. Among the Mandan Indians of North America the dove is held so sacred that neither man, woman, nor child will injure it; indeed, the Mandans declare that even their dogs, ferocious as they are, instinctively respect that bird.

In Captain Knight's *Diary of a Pedestrian in Cashmere and Thibet* we find frequent mention of sacred fish. At Vernagh, for instance, a tank "was filled with fine fish, all sacred and as fat as butter, from the plentiful support they receive from the devout among the Hindoos, not to mention the unbelieving travellers, who

also supply them for amusement. The fish swarmed in such numbers that they jostled each other fairly out of the water in a living mass while striving for grains of rice and bread."

Serpents have ever been the objects of the peculiar hatred and disgust of mankind. Among many nations they have been symbol of the evil principle; and when their abject fears have men to worship what they dreaded, serpents have been adored as ties. In Hindostan, where nearly fifty species of these abhorred reptiles lie in wait for the destruction of man, a coiled serpent forms the couch of the god Vishnu, and is the frequent attendant of others of their deities. But the boa, which sometimes reaches a length of thirty feet and upwards, is dignified with divine attributes, consulted as an oracle, and worshipped as a god. Colonel Torr while travelling in Ladak, came to a spot sacred to all the gods in the Hindoo calendar. After a good deal of prostration, prayer, and offering up of handfuls of flour, lumps of sugar, and ghee to his servants, the divinity at last vouchsafed to make his appearance "in the shape of a little serpent, about two and a half feet long, which wriggled about playfully in the sunshine, which had probably been to do with his leaving his snug hole in the rock than the gratification of the flexions of our followers. Their delight, not unmingled with awe at the reptile's appearance was unmistakably genuine; their credence was no feigned feeling." The native servants told the Colonel, that sometimes as many as twenty or thirty of these snakes appear at this spot to the faithful. The legend runs, that when the gods fled before the might of the Rakis (the Titans of Hindoo mythology) they took refuge, for a time, in the snows of the Himalayas, and serpents were placed to guard all the roads to their abode. One of these was one of the principal outposts of the serpent army, and probably from mere force of habit their descendants continue to keep up the routine of mount-guarding, &c. The legend goes on to say, that the gods, invigorated by the bracing alpine air, again took the field, utterly routed the Rakis, and slew them all. The fossils so plentifully strewn over the Sewalik, or lowest ranges of the Himalayas, are the bones of the slain Titans.

The worship of the serpent was one of the principles of primitive Druidism. Pliny has given us a curious account of the artemis, or serpent's egg, which was worn as their distinguishing badge by the Druids. Marvels of all kinds were told of this art. It was said to be formed at first by a great number of serpents entwined together, whose hissing at last raised it into the air, where it was to be caught ere it fell to the ground in a clean white cloth by a person mounted on a swift horse, who had immediately to get off at full speed; the enraged serpents pursuing him until they were stopped by a running stream. It has been conjectured that the great druidical temples of Avebury, Stonehenge, Carnac in I



tany, and most of the others which remain both in Britain and Gaul, were dedicated to the united worship of the sun and the serpent.

In Bennett's account of *Ceylon and its Capabilities*, there is a passage to the effect that the cobra da capello, every time it expends its poison, loses a joint of its tail, and eventually acquires a head which resembles that of a toad. One of the early races which inhabited Ceylon, the Nagas, worshipped the cobra as an emblem of the destroying power. So numerous were the followers of this gloomy idolatry at that time, that they gave the name of Nagadipo, the Island of Serpents, to the portion of the country which they held; in the same manner that Rhodes and Cyprus severally acquired the ancient designation of Ophiusa, from the fact of their being the residence of the Ophites, who introduced serpent-worship into Greece. In Ceylon, traces of this kind of worship are to the present time perceptible amongst the inhabitants, who, rather than put a cobra to death, enclose the reptile in a wicker-cage, and set it adrift on the nearest stream. In the Island of Nainativoe, to the south-west of Jaffa, there was till recently a little temple, dedicated to the goddess Naya Tambiran, in which consecrated serpents were tenderly reared, and daily fed at the expense of the worshippers.

Serpent-worship is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, forms of idolatry. It preceded Buddhism in India; and we have seen that it is still a reality in some parts of the world. If we desire to see it in all its hideous savagery, we shall discover it in Dahomey.

The holy scarabæus of the ancient Egyptians was an immense beetle. Of this creature, Sir S. Baker, in his most interesting work, *The Great Basin of the Nile*, gives the following particulars:

"It appears shortly after the commencement of the wet season, its labours continuing until the cessation of the rains, at which time it disappears. Was it not worshipped by the ancients as the harbinger of the high Nile? The existence of Lower Egypt depending upon the annual inundation, the rise of the river was observed with general anxiety. The beetle appears at the commencement of the rise in the river level, and from its great size and extraordinary activity in clearing the earth from all kinds of ordure, its presence is remarkable. Approaching at the season of the flood, may not the ancients have imagined some connection between the beetle and the river, and have considered it sacred as the harbinger of the inundation?"

"Thus we see," as Mr. James Ferguson observes, in his *Fire and Serpent Worship*, "from bulls to beetles, or from crocodiles to cats, all came alike to a people so essentially religious as the Egyptians seem to have been."

## A MAID FORLORN

BY FREDERICK TALBOT, AUTHOR OF 'THE WINNING HAZARD,' ETC.

THIS is the Charing-cross station of the Underground Railway, a cavern of yellow brick, lighted dimly from above—it is a dark foggy day—by long rows of corrugated glass, whereon the dust and mud of the upper world has thickly settled. All along the sides of this cavern of dingy yellow are shallow arched recesses, and in each of these is a yellow bench. Against the walls are hung innumerable gaudy placards. Joey Ladle offers you Barmecidean gin from a brass copper noggin; a facetious nabob, or pasha perhaps, derisively serves you hot pickles in your very face. To judge from all these placards you would think that life was spent in eating and drinking and idling your house, and otherwise going on in a gay and festive way. But it is hard to be gay when underground; one must have a sort of vampire nature for that. Those gloomy tunnels whose roofs are wreathed with perpetual steam; those squat engines that come forth from their mysterious recesses, clanking and labouring at their tasks; those carriages where the yellow gaslights glimmer from the glass eyes on a pale, careworn, nervous, irritable race, thronging and fro in ceaseless never-ending swarms,—those are not exhilarating sights. If you would see life in its ugliest least-appetising aspect, despite the pickles and Joey Ladle, dive underground, take a daylight—Heaven save the mark!—a daylight route to Mansion House or Moorgate-street.

But, on the platform opposite us, in one of those before-mentioned shallow recesses, is a group that surely is a pleasant one to look at. There is a pretty girl,—always a pleasant sight,—and she is with her lover, no doubt; and, after the first pang of natural jealousy, you acquiesce in that arrangement too, as one that accords with the fitness of things. The girl is standing, looking down with loving eyes,—sweet dark almond-shaped eyes, with deliciously long lashes,—and he is looking up with a smile, and has no doubt most pleasant things to say. He has a paper in his hand, which he is tearing into minute fragments. His sweetheart hovers over him like a butterfly. She brushes against him as though it were a delight to feel the texture of his coat. Now, with a pretty gesture, she sinks into a seat beside him. Let us draw nigh, with the privilege of our curiosity, and listen to their playful nothings.

'You villain,' says the girl, smiling the while—such a smile



when you see it close !—‘ you villain, how dare you do such a wicked thing !’

‘ You have to learn a thing or two yet, my dear,’ replies the man ; ‘ amongst others, how to take care of valuable documents. You didn’t think I should give you that back again, did you ?’

‘ Ernest, I thought you were a gentleman, that you were a man of honour.’

‘ From that point of view, Emmy, a written promise would be superfluous, therefore you will suffer no wrong by its destruction. Rely upon my honour, then, my dear, by all means ; you have nothing else to go for.’

‘ Wretch ! Your honour ! You haven’t a spark of it.’

‘ And yet you seem desirous that I should marry you. There’s an apparent inconsistency here.’

The girl made a swift movement, as though she would have attacked him with her hands. He recoiled a little. His hands were full of the fragments of paper. One or two fluttered to the ground. Swift as a hawk, Emmy swooped upon and picked them up.

Ernest began to frown. After all, he hadn’t completely got rid of this embarrassing document. He held the fragments in his hand ; but they might be pieced again, and rise up in judgment against him. How should he get rid of the pieces ?

He thought of throwing them over the line of rails, along which even now a train was about to glide. Emmy followed the glance of his eye. She would follow the flying fragments too, he knew. There would be a smash, a death, an inquest ; things would leak out—scandal, *éclaircissement*. What an unpleasant thing a desperate woman is ! No ; he would keep the pieces till he had an opportunity of burning them or throwing them away one by one. In the mean time the train had come up. Ernest was for Kensington.

‘ Adieu, Emmy,’ cried he, jumping into a first-class carriage. Emmy followed, and took her seat next to him, between him and the window. She watched his every movement as a cat might a mouse. The carriage was nearly full. Clearly he could do nothing here.

Ernest was on his way to South Kensington, to visit his *fiancée*, the Lady Cordelia Croucher ; but if this tigress of a woman were going to follow him, evidently it would be better he should not go to see her. As he alighted at the station, and Emmy followed close to his elbow, he began to feel wearied and disgusted. The sight of the pretty girl he once had loved was repulsive to him, and yet he didn’t know how to get rid of her. He made for the South Kensington Museum. If she followed him there, they would at least be unobserved ; and surely after a while she would tire of this persecution.

Ernest sat down in the picture-gallery of the museum. Emmy

took her seat by his side. Neither had exchanged a word since they had left the Westminster station. All of a sudden Ernest gave a tremendous start. A party of ladies were approaching—an old lady in black, with a double eyeglass and a catalogue; a young lady in blue—gauzy, diaphanous, charming. This latter was the Lady Cordelia.

Ernest saw the fair face of the Lady Cordelia brighten as she caught sight of her lover, but he dared not return the glance. No; he pretended to be looking the other way, to be examining a picture in the west gallery. With simulated enthusiasm, he got up and ran towards it. Emmy followed. As soon as they had turned the corner, Ernest made a dash for the entrance of the museum. There stood a policeman.

‘Policeman,’ cried Ernest.

‘Sir,’ said the man, touching his hat.

‘This young woman persists in following and annoying me.’

‘What do you do that for, miss?’ said the policeman severely, a little mollified, too, at the sight of beauty.

‘He has got something of mine he has stolen from me.’

‘Why don’t you give the young lady what you’ve got of hers?’

‘I have nothing of hers. See, here is my card.’

The policeman took the card, and read, ‘*The Hon. Ernest Maltravers.*’

‘Ha! I thought he was a swell,’ the officer murmured to himself. ‘Well, what do you want me to do, sir?’

‘To take this person into custody for annoying me.’

‘Policeman!’ cried Emmy, her voice undulating with excitement and passion, ‘take him into custody for stealing my letter.’

The peace-officer rubbed his chin in hesitation.

‘Why don’t you make it right with her, sir?’ he said at last.

‘Right! I owe her nothing; she has no claims upon me—none!’

‘Why don’t you leave the young gent alone?’

‘Because he is a swindler, and a thief, and a—’

Whatever other epithets she might have had in store were choked in a rising sob.

‘This here’s a queer game,’ muttered the policeman. ‘Look here,’ he said; ‘you go this way, sir, and you, miss, go that, and part friendly, in an agreeable rational kind of way.’

‘I’ll follow him to the death!’ cried Emmy.

Just then an empty hansom passed, the driver of which held up his hand to Ernest as to a possible fare.

‘Stop!’ cried Ernest. ‘Now, policeman, let that woman follow me—at your peril!’

Ernest jumped on the foot-board of the cab. Emmy made a bound to follow him. The policeman endeavoured to seize her round



the waist. She eluded his grasp, and darted into the hansom after Ernest.

A small crowd was beginning to collect. The diaphanous skirt of Lady Cordelia was shimmering in the distant horizon.

'Drive on!' said Ernest desperately, striking at the trap-door overhead with his cane. 'Drive on!'

The driver made a pantomimic gesture, expressive of intense amusement, for the benefit of the small crowd of spectators.

'Ever see a cat and dog in a baasket?' he remarked to the policeman.

'Drive on!' shouted Ernest furiously.

'Where to, sir?'

'No. 999 Piccadilly,' he shouted to the driver through the little trap-door. Away they went.

Now No. 999 Piccadilly was the bachelor residence of Lord Cecil Crummet, one of the wickedest men about town. Could he once reach his friend's chambers Ernest knew he would be safe. Lord Cecil's servants were used to dealing with refractory females.

It was early in August, just the flitting time of the year. Everybody was not yet out of town, but everybody was thinking of going. When they reached Lord Cecil's apartments Ernest found that he had gone to Scotland. The house was in possession of the painters and cleaners. A man in a paper-cap was coming down a long ladder outside.

'I'll go upstairs and write to Lord Cecil,' cried Ernest to the servant who opened the door. 'Don't let that female enter, on any account.'

Emmy found the door slammed in her face. Nature could sustain her no longer. She began to cry.

'Why, Emmy, what's the row?' said a broad good-natured voice from above.

It came from the man in the paper-cap who was descending the ladder.

'O, John! is it you? and are you doing Lord Cecil's rooms?'

'That's about it,' said John.

'That wretch who's gone upstairs, he's got a paper of mine, and he's going to burn it: get it from him, John. If you get it, John, I'll—'

'Well!'

'I'll marry you, John.'

John went up the ladder like the proverbial lamplighter.

Ernest had found his way into Lord Cecil's smoke-room, which looked into Piccadilly. Here there were the materials for a fire, laid but not lighted. He carefully extracted all the fragments of the torn letter from his pocket, rolled them into a ball, placed them in the middle of the fire-place. Now for a match. There wasn't

one in the room. Never mind, there would be sure to be one in the next room, which was Cecil's bedroom. Ernest went in to look for one.

Paper-cap walked in at the window : he seized the bundle of fragments, put them in his pocket, tore up a letter he saw on the chimney-board, thrust these pieces into the place of the other, and walked out of the window again, and took his stand on the ladder to watch.

Ernest came back with a lighted match. He fired the funeral pyre : it burnt up brightly for a moment, then smouldered and went into tinder.

'Saved, by Jove !' he muttered.

'Saved by dear John !' cried Emmy, as she received the precious fragments of paper from the devoted paper-cap.

She sat up all night piecing the fragments. Next day Ernest had a lawyer's letter ; and, to make a long story short, it cost him a couple of thousand pounds before he got those fragments back again.

John is now a flourishing painter and decorator on his own half. He no longer wears a paper-cap, but always a shiny chimney-pot. Emmy, his wife, is sleek and fat and prosperous. She often recalls with a smile the fact, that she owes all her prosperity to a successful paper chase.

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## AUNT DUNK

A Story, in Four Chapters

BY L. K. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN

### CHAPTER I. AUNT DUNK AT HOME.

DID any of you know aunt Dunk? Because if you did not, remember that ignorance is bliss. I experienced poverty, toothache, and aunt Dunk, all rather violently, in the course of one year, and I decidedly preferred the two former.

In June we were ruined; in July I suffered from *tic-douloureux*; and in August I went to live with aunt Dunk. There had been an uncle Dunk once, but it was a situation of some difficulty; therefore he died as soon as he could. His last and most fervent wish was, that his wife should not soon join him in the family vault; but, dear man, with his usual kind thought for others, he worded it very beautifully.

'Hannah, my dear,' said he tenderly, 'I hope you will have a long, long life.'

'That I shall not, Mr. Dunk,' said my aunt with her accustomed promptitude. And then uncle Dunk, perceiving his mistake, and feeling too surely that to suggest to her to live would but decide her to die at once, added: 'Ay, my dear, I ought to have known you better. You won't get on without me; you'll soon be after me, won't you, Hannah?'

'You were never more mistaken in your life, Mr. Dunk,' said my aunt; and those were the last words that fell on his ears, for he was so well satisfied with them, that he died without giving her an opportunity of contradicting him again.

And then aunt Dunk lived on at Dunk Marsh, with Crampton the old butler, and Crow her maid and housekeeper, probably the only two people in the world who could have endured the life. They got on pretty well with her, by always suggesting to her to do everything they did not wish done, and *vice versa*. Moreover, although the best of friends, they abused one another perpetually to my aunt as a matter of principle, keeping her amused and really quite comfortable by imaginary quarrels. They were good-hearted creatures, or they would not have plotted to introduce a poor relation to their mistress's home; which they did as soon as they heard of our losses. They at once suggested to aunt Dunk that no doubt we should be expecting her to take one of us to live with her, but that it was a

thing that never could be. It would upset the household, and put an end to all regularity. Mrs. Crow added, that although nothing would ever induce her to leave her dear lady, she had heard Mr. Crampton declare that if any of the Miss Pellams came to live at Dunk Marsh one day, he should give warning the next; while that great man privately informed my aunt that he knew for certain that Mrs. Crow would never stay to be put upon by two ladies. This course, steadily pursued with judicious alternations for one month, resulted in an invitation to one of us to take up our abode with aunt Dunk. The following is a copy of her letter:

‘Girls,—I am glad to learn that you have lost all your money. I hope you will never have any more to lose. At all events, you shall have none from me, living or dead. Women can live by their brains as well as men. However, as you no longer have it in your power to make fools of yourselves with other folks’ hair piled on the tops of your heads, stuff enough in each gown to make three for any reasonable woman, and tags and bobtails hanging all over you, I will take one of you to live with me—especially as Crampton and Crow object most strongly. You are all ugly, but if one has grown uglier than the rest, that one I will have. I have written to the clergyman and churchwardens of your parish to decide this matter for me, as I like to uphold the Church in all things.—I am your aunt,  
HANNAH DUNK.’

The knotty point referred to the decision of the Church was a source of some amusement to us. Our rector was a shy young man, very much in love with my sister Ellen. He came up to the house with a red face and an open letter. I believe he had passed a sleepless night in agonies of doubt as to the course he ought to pursue.

‘Miss Pellam,’ said he, ‘I have received a most extraordinary letter from a relative of yours, a *most* extraordinary letter.’

‘Indeed, Mr. Anson!’ We all preserved our gravity, but Ellen blushed violently as she bent over her work.

He looked at her, but he spoke to my eldest sister, Anne. ‘Really I hardly know how to act. If I disregard it, I may be doing you an injury; yet—It is an unheard-of request; no gentleman—no man of any—’ He walked about the room in dire perplexity. ‘To be required to look round deliberately upon five sisters, and to decide—to pronounce—I mean to say, to announce—to one of them that she is—that one considers her—that is—’

Here we all burst into ungovernable laughter, and lightened his task by assuring him that we were aware of its nature, and that no doubt could exist upon the subject. Hannah, my aunt’s namesake and godchild, had long enjoyed the distinction of ugliest among Pellams. Then he showed us aunt Dunk’s letter. It was as follows:



\* Sir,—You are doubtless aware that it is the duty of the clergy to assist those who are perplexed in spirit. I am in that condition, and I apply to you as a clergyman to assist me. I wish to have one of the Miss Pellams, my nieces, to live with me, and for reasons which I will proceed to explain it is my desire to select the ugliest. In my day I was a handsome young woman, and was much annoyed by proposals of marriage from men of various standing. I refused them all till I was black in the face; but the pest continued, until in sheer self-defence I was obliged to marry my dear departed, the late Mr. Dunk, almost the only man of my acquaintance who had had the good sense never to ask me. You will easily understand that I do not want to have my middle age disturbed by the same kind of annoyance, by means of any young woman residing under my roof. Neither should I wish any one to suffer as I did. I intend to guard my niece from every proposal of marriage, and I shall hope at my death to leave her in that state of single blessedness and isolation the attainment of which should in these days be the object of every right-minded woman. I hail with pleasure the advance of public opinion, and still more of public practice, on this point. But I will not at present trouble you with my views, merely pausing to remark that woman is evidently at length taking her proper place as man's equal. I now come to the subject of my letter. Although recognising that the annoyance to which I have alluded is less to be apprehended than in my own youth, I still wish to reduce the danger in the present case to a minimum. I would, therefore, ask of you, as the clergyman of the parish in which my nieces reside, to call upon them in company with your churchwardens, and, according to the best of your and their judgment, to decide for me which of these young women is possessed of fewest attractions; in plain words, which is the ugliest. Awaiting your early reply, which I doubt not will convey a solution of my difficulty, and perfectly ready to expound to you my views upon woman, should you desire it, I am, sir, yours faithfully,

HANNAH DUNK.'

This letter was the subject of much laughter, and more discussion. The difficulties were: first, how to avoid the churchwardens, for aunt Dunk would hardly consider the election legal unless her commands were fulfilled to the letter; secondly, how to contrive the election of myself, the only one willing to face the situation. From our knowledge of aunt Dunk, we felt sure she would not take the one recommended, but here all certainty stopped.

At length we resolved that the question of churchwardens should be waived for the present, and that, as a preliminary step, Mr. Anson should write to name Hannah as undoubtedly the plainest of the family.

According to our expectations, this produced an angry letter from

aunt Dunk, demanding why the signatures of the churchwardens had been omitted, and desiring that photographs of the five sisters should be taken for her at once. There was no escape. The churchwardens were accordingly sworn to secrecy, and in a state of great amazement were surreptitiously introduced into our drawing-room, when, in consequence of Hannah's perfect good-humour and tact, they arrived at a unanimous decision in her favour.

In the mean time we received a most curious epistle. It was to this effect :

'Young Ladys if One of you wants for tu come say you dont and if anny particular wants not for tu come say you du from your Umble servants to comand  
CRAMPTON & CROW.'

We profited by the advice. My eldest sister sent with the photographs a letter expressing the gratitude and readiness of the whole family, but adding that if we were allowed a voice in the matter, it would entirely coincide with the decision of Mr. Anson and his churchwardens, and venturing to hope that in any case aunt Dunk would not decide upon taking me, as I was several years younger than the others, and had bad health and irritable nerves. All this was strictly true, and indeed poor Anne did her best to dissuade me from putting myself in the way of a trial which she herself had experienced many years before. Her warnings were disregarded. I was self-willed and spoilt, and eager to judge for myself of eccentricities of which I had heard so much.

The effect of Anne's letter was all I could desire. I was sent for at once, and I went. Aunt Dunk's carriage met me at the station. It was the carriage in which she and uncle Dunk had taken their wedding tour some thirty or forty years before. It was very high, and very heavy, with enormous wheels, and was lined with thick musty yellow leather. Postillion and horses matched it well. The horses had thick legs, thick necks, thick ears, and thick heads, which latter they poked straight out before them. The postillion was aunt Dunk's own servant, and had acted in the same capacity in the very tour afore named. His hair was gray, his jacket was darned, and his horses pulled different ways ; but they brought me to Dunk Marsh, with no other incident than one remark from the old man as I approached the carriage. ' Bless my old eyes, you are a little un ! ' said he, turning round in his saddle to survey me. And then he laughed aloud, and kicking one leg up in the air, and plunging the other into his horse's flank, off he set.

The old manor-house where aunt Dunk lived and worried was long and low, red and rambling, standing in flat water-meadows surrounded by rushes and poplars, dreary beyond description. At the door appeared Crampton and Crow. Why Crow always appeared to welcome the coming guest, I never could divine. It was either a





Pasquier, del.

Edmund Evans, sc.

FIRST SIGHT OF AUNT DUNK.





fancy of her own or of my aunt's. Possibly it was a custom of the Dunks'. They received me kindly, as one they had known as a child.

'Ma'am,' said Crampton in a hushed voice as we crossed the low red-tiled hall, 'you'll have a hard time of it with my mistress. Excuse me, but I hope you'll bear with her.'

'And if we can give you any little hints we will, bless you; for you're as like what you was at three weeks old as pin to pin,' added Crow, pressing my hand.

'And be sure you never gainsay her, ma'am,' said Crampton; 'if she says you are as black as them niggers, be sure you say you've known it all along. She's a good lady at heart.'

'If one can but find it out,' added Crow, who generally finished his sentences. Perhaps it was for this purpose she accompanied him.

'And she's getting on in years, Miss Jane. She's not as young as she were, poor lady.'

'You old dotard! that's not true. I get younger every day I live.'

It was a loud voice, and it was close to us. Crampton and Crow vanished, and I turned to be welcomed by aunt Dunk.

Short and spare, dressed in a black gown to which the same adjectives might truthfully be applied; small sharp black eyes, thin tight lips, red cheeks, and a most palpable 'front' of shiny black curls, above which peeped a quarter of an inch of real gray hair. She was holding open a door, and signing to me to enter.

'The ridiculous old idiot! daring to talk about me! I'll let him know I won't be talked about. Not as young as I was! I'll be bound I'm a great deal younger and brisker! Come in here, child, and let's have a look at you. Ah, come, you are plain enough. I knew I was right, in spite of all their Hannahs. No colour, no eyes to speak of; spots on the face; crooked nose. Well done.'

It was a long untidy nondescript room. A fire burned on the hearth, and half-a-dozen schoolgirls stared in the background.

'Sit there till I send off my class. They have just done. John Groom and Crampton said you could not be here till six, and I knew you would come by five; so I had up the girls to worry them—Crampton, I mean. He can't abide any one to find them here. Now you shall see what physical education means. Girls! attention! march!'

And, to my utter amazement, placing her hands on her shoulders aunt Dunk began to march up and down the room, followed by her class, some of whom imitated her with a fidelity which was too much for the gravity of the others.

'Were you ever drilled, child?' asked my aunt, stopping so abruptly that the whole class nearly came to grief.

'No, ma'am,' I responded meekly, faintly.

'High time you should begin. Stand up and do as we do.'

I obeyed in fear and trembling, and some moments passed in

feeble imitation of the terrible energy aunt Dunk displayed. Conscious of being an object of ridicule to my fellow-pupils, I was ready to drop from mortification and fatigue, when the door was quietly opened and a young man entered the room. My aunt nodded to him, still continuing her instructions, and I stepped aside and resumed my seat.

'How d'ye do, Charles? One, two, three. Tired, child? Stuff and nonsense! Head up, Eliza Stours. One, two, three. Sit down, Charles; just done. Shoulders down, Ellen Toms. One, two—'

'Charles' looked both vexed and amused, and I shivered in my chair. I had heard of Henry and Charles Treyhen, sons of aunt Dunk's only sister, and I recognised the present Charles as a Treyhen and the clergyman of the parish.

'There,' said aunt Dunk triumphantly, 'that will do. Put on your bonnets, girls. That is something like teaching—beginning at the beginning. I have a theory, Jane, that the first thing to teach children is—how to walk. It is the first step towards preserving health. People's chests contract with stooping—hence disease. Charles here differs from me.'

'Only in thinking other instruction of more importance.'

'There you are quite mistaken. The groundwork is of the most consequence. You begin at the roof, and so it all falls down together. You try to stuff their brains before they've got any. This is how you go to work—Here, girls! attention!' They stood before her. 'Now, my good girls, Mr. Treyhen wishes you to learn to think—to use your reason. Listen to me. He wants to know who wrote St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians. Now think.'

A dead silence. The girls looked at one another. Aunt Dunk waxed impatient. 'Come, girls, *think*; can't ye say something?'

Thus admonished, the eldest girl grew very red in the face, and feebly suggested 'Solomon,' while another, gaining courage from the immediate discomfiture of her friend, promptly added 'Moses.'

'No, he didn't, and *he* didn't,' said aunt Dunk in triumph; 'and now you may go home and find out who did, and mind you walk as should be. There; that's all thinking does for them. You work their brains too soon. All children are fools, and you may be sure it's for some good purpose, and that purpose undoubtedly is to give the body time to grow in health and strength. Those girls won't be fools when they are grown women, unless you make them so with your preaching and your teaching. There, now, don't contradict me. My mind's made up. Here's my niece, and she's not come here to help you with the schools, I can tell you. She will have duties at home.'

Mr. Treyhen looked to see if my amusement equalled his own. It did not. I was weary and overwhelmed, and already regretting the wayward fancy which had brought me to Dunk Marsh.



'What did you come for?' asked aunt Dunk suddenly.

Though the question was not addressed to me, I felt it in every nerve, and was on the point of answering, 'Because I was a fool.'

Mr. Treyhen forestalled me. 'To ask you to give up drilling the children.'

'Then I shall not. So that's settled and done.'

'Very well. I suppose you like being the laughing-stock of the village.'

'I am no such thing, you impudent boy.'

'O, then I did not meet Eliza Stours yesterday evening marching the girls, and making them walk like you.'

'I am heartily glad to hear it. My instruction is appreciated, you see.'

'Very much so. Eliza took off your voice and manners so well, that Tom and William Champ, and young Groves, and one or two others, were applauding loudly, and I felt ready to laugh myself. "Just like the old missis," said Tom.'

'I don't believe a word of it. The little minx! I'll wash my hands of the whole lot of them. I'll never believe it. I have no patience with the people.'

Apparently Mr. Treyhen was satisfied, for he turned the conversation, and chatted pleasantly upon other subjects for some time, receiving my aunt's repeated contradictions with a lazy smile which excited my envy, for already she irritated me almost beyond endurance. When he took leave she called to him to come back, but he did not hear.

'Run after him, Jane. Just tell him to stop at the school, and desire the second class, the second drill-class, to be here by nine to-morrow.'

I overtook him in the hall, and delivered my message. He laughed outright. 'You should not have caught me, Miss Pellam. Please tell my aunt that I cannot possibly deliver such a message. I do not recognise the class; or stay—tell her I will send them, and the Champ boys too, to applaud. Good-evening.'

It was too audacious. How could I repeat it?

'Well,' said aunt Dunk sharply, 'what did he say?'

'Nothing, aunt Dunk,' I mumbled rather than spoke.

'That's not true. Out with it at once. Some impudence, I'll be bound. "Nothing" won't do for me.' And with those sharp eyes fixed upon me I felt impelled to repeat the message word for word. Aunt Dunk gave a snort, but nevertheless I could see that she was not displeased.

'There! I knew it. Never say "Nothing" to me, or we sha'n't get on. Come up-stairs now. You are nice and ugly, that's one comfort.'

Now I really was *not so very* ill-looking, indeed some people

thought me rather pretty at times ; and so Crow hinted to my aunt that evening, but aunt Dunk would not hear of it. I was irreparably frightful in her eyes, for she had settled it herself.

We dined together in a room on the other side of the hall. It was the same size and shape as the drawing-room, and was hung round with pictures of ancient and modern Dunks in rags. I do not mean that these highly-respectable personages were represented as clothed in rags, but that the canvases were, from age and ill-treatment, reduced to that condition. Crampton waited in carpet slippers. He stood behind his mistress with his arms akimbo, and joined freely in the conversation. For this he apologised to me the first time he found me alone. 'My mistress expects it of me, ma'am, and I thought it might be a help to you on the first night ; but I am aware that it is not the custom in families of distinction.' And it was a help on that first night, and many others. The old man was, however, often sorely perplexed, between his anxiety to propitiate his mistress and his reluctance to hurt my feelings.

'And so they really do not call you the plain one,' said aunt Dunk, eyeing me complacently. 'Why, I pitched on you the moment I saw the photographs ; didn't I, Crampton ?'

'Yes, ma'am ; I be-lieve you did. But them photographs is often nasty deceiving things.'

'Well, they did not deceive us here, at all events. Why, she's as ugly as sin.'

'I don't think the young lady is so bad to look at, ma'am,' said Crampton, in patronising pity.

'Then you know nothing about it, you stupid old man. These peas are not half boiled, Crampton. I wish you would tell the girl.'

'I spo'ke to her yesterday, ma'am.'

'What business had you to do any such thing ? What business have you to speak to the maids unless I desire it ?'

This lively style of conversation continued until we adjourned to the drawing-room, where aunt Dunk at once took out her netting. No elegant silk purse or airy scarf, but an enormous length of netting of the coarsest twine, fastened to a nail in the wall. At this she stood up the whole evening, working furiously, and talking vehemently. She questioned me minutely concerning every detail of our family history, plans, and prospects, blaming everything we had done or thought of doing. My father was quite wrong in dying so suddenly, my mother had no right to linger so long, my sisters ought all to have been brothers, and I myself had no business to have been born at all. All this was far from soothing to one used to the indulgence of a sister Anne ; but ere long it merged into the alarming, for I committed the great error of pronouncing an animated 'No.' 'If I had my way with you girls, you would all be trained to some profession. Anne would have made a capital doctor,



Emily might have been a lawyer, Mary an architect. All of you should have turned your hands to something.'

'O aunt Dunk, impossible! I am sure Anne never could go about feeling people's pulses and looking at their tongues.'

'Why not, eh? Is Anne a fool? Every woman should make the most of her talent; and now I think of it, you are not too old to begin. Time has been lost, for of course you know nothing, and can do nothing; but much may be done yet. I should like to make a lawyer of you, and maybe, by the time you have studied a bit, the profession would be open to you; but if you have a fancy to be a doctor, that could be done at once.'

Frightened and weary, I could only sit and tremble, as I saw myself in imagination the cynosure of all eyes, standing up to undergo an examination in the schools, preparing to brow-beat a witness, or sharpening my knife to cut off a fellow-creature's leg. Could aunt Dunk really mean it? There was such a terrible energy and earnestness about her, that if she had announced her intention of drowning herself in the tea-kettle, one would have expected her to do it at once. I am ashamed to say that I cried myself to sleep that night over the prospect of walking the hospitals.

## CHAPTER II.

### AUNT DUNK ON WOMAN'S RIGHTS.

DAYLIGHT enabled me to ridicule my fears; but they returned with full force when I went down-stairs, for aunt Dunk was holding forth to Charles Treyhen, and her subject was the necessity of educating me to a profession. She only nodded to me as I came in, and continued talking vehemently, only stopping to say 'Pshaw!' when he got up to greet me. It was certainly embarrassing for a young woman to eat her breakfast before two people who were discussing the question whether she would excel most as doctor, lawyer, or architect. Aunt Dunk was very eager, Charles Treyhen considerably amused.

'I tell you the girl has no fortune. She must do something. Marry, you say. That's all nonsense, and you know it, Charles. The day for that is past. Girls don't marry nowadays—at least, these ugly ones don't. They've a better destiny.'

'Really, aunt Dunk, it can hardly be pleasant to Miss Pellam to listen to this discussion.'

'Stuff and nonsense! She don't care a pin, and if she does she must get over it, for she'll, for she'll have to hear enough about it before I've done with her.'

'I believe you,' *sotto voce*; and aloud, 'I will be no party to such rudeness.'

'Where's the rudeness? It's common sense. The girl can't starve.'

'Give her some of your superfluity.'

'Mr. Treyhen! as if I should take it!' It escaped me involuntarily, and I coloured crimson to find that I had spoken.

'Hoity-toity, my young lady! As if you would take it, forsooth! I can tell you, you shall take it, if I choose; and maybe you'll have to take it. Am I not to give my own money to my own brother's daughter, if I please?'

'I beg your pardon, aunt Dunk.'

'And you will promise to be good, and to ask for money whenever you want it,' added Mr. Treyhen, in comical imitation of my frightened manner.

'She will do no such thing. Ask me for money indeed! I should like to hear it. She shall keep herself, and from this moment I devote myself, first to the choice of a profession for her, and secondly to fitting her for that profession when chosen.'

'In other words, you will cease to worry your friends about women in general, and will content yourself with worrying woman in particular.'

'I shall not, Charles; and you are abominably rude.'

'Miss Pellam, what profession shall you choose, supposing any liberty of choice is left you?—which it will not be.'

'Now, Charles, why say that, when you know perfectly well she will be free as air, provided only she chooses in accordance with my wishes? I imagine some consideration is owing to me.'

'Very well; I must frame my question differently. Miss Pellam, what profession do you hope aunt Dunk will choose for you? Will you build my house, cut off my arm, or ruin me at law by your eloquence?'

'All appear to me equally terrible and impossible.'

'Impossible they are not, Jane, and of that I will soon convince you.'

'Not now, aunt Dunk; please wait till I am gone. I am bent on finding out whether Miss Pellam would rather be soldier, sailor, tinker, or tailor, that I may give her the advantage of my influence with you.'

'Influence you have none, either with me or anybody else. I regret that as yet the noble professions of soldiers and sailors are closed to us. But that will all come in time.'

'And you will immediately join a marching regiment, aunt Dunk, and oblige poor Miss Pellam to serve her time as middy.'

'It would do her all the good in the world, and had I been born in these days of emancipation, I should undoubtedly have entered the army.'

'As soldier, sailor, or lawyer you would have excelled, aunt Dunk.'

'That I should not, Charles; but I humbly hope I should have done my duty, as I mean to do now.'



'If you mean to perform that disagreeable operation now, aunt Dunk, I, knowing what it is, shall take my leave. Good-morning, Miss Pellam. I wish I could hope that, when next I see you, you may still be allowed to knit, net, and crochet work, which to my mind are the chief duties of woman.'

'Charles, you are a fool—' began aunt Dunk; but the appearance of Crampton and the letter-bag arrested her speech, and for some time she was fully occupied, while Charles still lingered, talking to me.

'Well,' said aunt Dunk at length, laying down a letter which she had been attentively perusing, 'if I could only have foreseen the glorious destiny of woman in the nineteenth century, I for one would never have married; your uncle Dunk might have whistled for me. But in my day a woman had no profession but marriage. An unmarried woman was nothing but an old maid; now she is something more than man, better than wife or widow. What a fool I was, to be sure!'

'But what is this glorious destiny of which everybody writes and talks? Do tell me, aunt Dunk,' said Charles.

'What is it! Why, emancipation from the social slavery of centuries; franchise, professions, the prizes of life open to us—in a word, equality with man.'

'I am glad you think so highly of man; I rather fancied you despised him.'

'I don't think at all highly of man. He is a mean despicable creature, and he has kept everything to himself as long as he could. But every dog has its day, and, thank goodness, *his* day's past and gone at last. It is our turn now. Man grows more abominable every day. In my young days, though they did keep us out of our rights, they had the grace to be ready enough to marry and keep us. They don't even do that much now. I made a fuss to have the ugliest of the Pellam girls; but upon my word, now I think of it, any one of 'em would have done nowadays.'

'Aunt Dunk, light dawns. I begin dimly to comprehend all this agitation about woman's rights. You open my eyes; you enlarge my mind. You were all happy enough as long as you all had a fair chance of being married; but now that the increase of luxuries and expensive tastes has rendered marriage an event of rare occurrence, you demand, forsooth, to enter the arena as man's equal. He will none of your help and sympathy; he shall meet you as a rival on his own grounds.'

'That's not true; all claptrap, every word. There are some fools who hold that woman's highest place is as wife and mother. They pretend that the rights we are claiming should only be given to those who are waiting to be made wives—slaves, I should say—or to those who *miss that slavery altogether*. But bless you, boy,

that's all bosh, and it's dying out, Charles. It did well enough to break the ice; it was but the thin end of the wedge. I hope to live to see the time when girls will look upon married life as a last resource when health and powers are failing, the battle of life fought, and the prize won—just as men do now, you know.'

'Aunt Dunk, aunt Dunk, defend me from a wife covered with Victoria Crosses and Waterloo medals!'

'Defend yourself from any wife at all. No, no; the day for that is past; I look forward to a glorious consummation of the present dispensation in a perfect equality of man and woman.'

I looked up in astonishment, which was lessened in the course of the day, when I accidentally lighted upon this very sentence in a book.

'Bravo, aunt Dunk; *encore!*' exclaimed Charles. 'That was worthy of a platform. Why do you not give the public the benefit of those mysterious expressions? Make Miss Pellam an orator; a female orator must have a "glorious mission."'

'Upon my word, the boy has hit it!' exclaimed aunt Dunk, starting up. 'Dear me! That he should have had the wit to think of it! Well, men are not *all* fools, that's one comfort. It's the very thing. I'll train you up for public speaking, Jane; so that's settled and done.'

As usual, aunt Dunk spoke with such energy that we both felt that she meant it. I grew white as a sheet as I saw my own conviction reflected in Mr. Treyhen's face; I saw too that he felt for me. His whole manner altered, and he was startled into expostulating. He could not have done worse. Every word he uttered only confirmed her resolution, and I was surprised at his eager pertinacity, so different from the cool sarcasm with which he had hitherto treated her. At length he took his leave, with a mortification so evident that aunt Dunk was in the seventh heaven:

The day wore on wearily. Prompt in action as in speech, aunt Dunk ransacked the library for works on eloquence, oratory, and the management of the voice. She wrote to London for the latest publications on the same subjects, and was only prevented from writing to Mr. Gladstone for advice by my immediate acquiescence in the proposal.

'I would just ask how a young man should be trained to speak in public. I shouldn't say it's for a woman, of course. It's all the same.'

'A very good idea, aunt Dunk,' said I, in obedience to violent winks from Crampton, for the conversation took place at dinner. 'No doubt Mr. Gladstone will be charmed; especially now, in the recess, when he can have nothing to do.'

'Nothing to do, child! Why, the man's worked to death. I should not wonder if he had all his letters burnt unread, now Parlia-



ment is up. Now I think of it, I'll write to Mr. Mill instead. I shall tell him the whole truth, and send you up to see him if he wishes it. Crampton and Crow could take you up—couldn't you, Crampton ?'

'With pleasure, ma'am. We should like to see the nobility and gentry once more, ma'am.'

'Why, you stupid old man, do you call Mr. Mill the nobility and gentry ? You'd like to see Madame Tussaud's waxworks, I expect. That's more in your line, to say nothing of the shop-windows.'

'Precisely, ma'am ; I was on the point of mentioning the shops, ma'am. We would be proud to take charge of Miss Jane, ma'am.'

'I'm not sure I won't go myself and state my views to Mr. Mill. He's the man for us, Jane.'

I sought safety in silence.

After luncheon, aunt Dunk announced her intention of driving into Crippleton alone. She had business, and I was to stay at home and write to Anne, and tell her I was perfectly comfortable and quite as ugly as aunt Dunk expected.

As soon as she was gone, Crampton entered the room with a huge pile of books which he placed before me.

'My mistress begs you will look these through, ma'am, if you please, and tell her what's inside of them when she comes back ; and if you please, ma'am, if you've no objection, I think of taking out my gun for a 'are, ma'am. My mistress expects of me to keep the house supplied, though she makes a rule of objecting if she catches me doing of it, so I am obliged to do it on the sly. There is no fear of nobody calling, ma'am.'

I signified my consent, and he went on :

'If I might make so bold, ma'am, Mr. Treyhen and Mr. Charles sometimes looks in, and my mistress wished them to be told that she is gone into Crippleton to consult Mr. Williamson about the matter in hand.'

I promised to deliver the message, and he left me. I turned wearily to the books—Cicero, Burke, Whately ; I gazed upon them with terror, and letting my head fall on the table, I burst into tears.

A woman who cries in the drawing-room should always do it judiciously ; that is to say, with her hair (if real) down, and taking care to leave off before her eyes and nose are red ; for she can never foresee who may surprise her. I fulfilled both these conditions, and the Mr. Treyhens came just in time to see me at my best.

There was a momentary confusion on both sides, and then Charles Treyhen advanced with eager solicitude. He was so sorry, so very sorry—of course it was aunt Dunk ; but could he do nothing ? His sympathy made my tears flow faster ; but collecting myself, I pointed to the books.

'Cicero! Burke! You do not mean that she is going on with that nonsense? Henry, can you believe it? Miss Pellam, let me introduce my brother.' And he repeated what had passed in the morning.

Henry laughed aloud.

'It is impossible. Even aunt Dunk could not be so mad. The thing could not be done. By the bye, where is my aunt, Miss Pellam?'

I faithfully delivered my message. The brothers looked at one another, and all laughter died out from the face of the elder, while Charles paced the room in an excitement of which I should not have thought him capable.

'Dolt that I was! I should have known her better. She took me by surprise, or I should not have been fool enough to oppose her. Had I but agreed, she would have dropped it at once. And I actually suggested the idea. Never, never shall I forgive myself.'

'But, Mr. Treyhen, do you really think she means it?' said I, trembling.

'Of course she does. Aunt Dunk always means it, and does it too. She always has some crotchet in her head. The last was what she was pleased to term "physical education." That I imagine died last night, as I find she has not had any of the girls up to-day. That, too, was my doing; and she is consequently ready for anything, and especially anything likely to annoy me. She is only to be conquered by ridicule; she cannot oppose it; and if she can be made to feel that the hobby of the moment places her in a ridiculous light, she generally drops it.'

'Then we may hope; for the present plan is of all imaginable ones most open to ridicule.'

'She will call it narrow-minded opposition, and glory in persevering.'

I inquired who was this Mr. Williamson, whose name evidently gave a more serious aspect to the affair, and I heard that he was one of the few who possessed any influence with my aunt; a man of vulgar mind and manners, holding very advanced opinions; a lecturer, an atheist, and a firm upholder of woman's rights.

'Especially that of conferring hare-shooting upon man. I declare I hate Woman. I beg your pardon, Miss Pellam, I didn't mean you,' said Henry.

'I hate her too, Mr. Treyhen. Aunt Dunk is enough to make one detest the very name, especially when it is dignified with a capital W, which I know it always is in her mind.'

We tried to invent some plan of opposition, but the experience of both brothers pronounced it hopeless. They agreed that it would be best to let things take their course, and it was possible that the fancy, if unopposed, might pass away.



'After all, if she only makes you read and recite to her, it will be no more than a bore, and I don't see what more she could do just yet,' said Henry's common sense.

But aunt Dunk was capable of a great deal more, and she lost no time in proving it. She returned before her nephews were gone, and she returned triumphant.

'Here I am, Jane! The very thing has turned up. How do you do, boys? Mr. Williamson is to hold a public meeting this day month—a lecture on "Woman's Rights"—and the leading people in the town want him to get a lady to speak. Lady A——'s speaking at—— has put them up to it. O, she's a blessed woman! To think of a woman like *that* having no right to a seat in parliament, when a young Hop-o'-my-thumb like you, Henry, might get in to-morrow if you liked! The world's all topsy-turvy. Well, Jane is to speak this day month at Crippleton Townhall. There's a fine beginning, Jane! You'll have to work hard though, I promise you.'

'Miss Pellam to speak! Aunt Dunk, are you mad? You have not really entered into any such engagement?' exclaimed Charles, starting up in great excitement as I hid my face in my hands with a moan of real terror.

'But I have; and what's more, I mean to carry it out.'

'Impossible; it can never be. You do not consider—'

'I consider enough to know that it's no business of yours.'

'No business of mine! It is the business of every man to prevent tyranny, oppression—'

In vain his brother signed to him to be silent, and the dispute continued with vehemence, while I sat and trembled in utter misery.

'Is Charles possessed?' whispered Henry to me. 'He can generally turn her round his finger, and he is making matters worse every minute. We shall find you spouting on the dining-room table next time we call, Miss Pellam.'

'If she does, *you* sha'n't hear her,' interrupted aunt Dunk. 'I've seen your signs and winks and nods at Charles. D'ye think I'm blind, eh? There, go away, both of you.'

Henry vanished, looking half the size he had appeared on entering the house. Charles walked off in high anger, leaving aunt Dunk in the best of tempers. Nothing pleased her so much as a pitched battle. Her last word was 'Humph!' and it was uttered with a short laugh of mingled scorn and triumph as she stood and watched him take leave of me.

From that day my fate was decided. I had to study the books before named, with others which came from London. I was also required to learn and recite a great deal by heart; and Mr. Williamson himself brought the speech which I was expected to deliver. I went through it all in dogged despair, hardly believing in the possibility of the threatened trial. And yet ever before my eyes floated

the awful vision of a vast room, a glare of light, a sea of upturned faces, all watching, waiting, listening for me, Jane Pellam, to speak. Occasionally I had wild fits of crying, but my usual state was one of incredulous despair. Mr. Williamson's visits were what I most loathed. His general appearance was repulsive; his hair long and untidy, and his hands so guiltless of soap, that I recoiled with horror when aunt Dunk desired him to place me in a proper attitude for speaking. I had to stand on an ottoman and declaim before him and aunt Dunk, while they criticised my performance. My one hope was that he would pronounce me utterly incompetent, and to this day I believe that he would have done so, but for aunt Dunk's determination and her hare-shooting. One dreadful evening she actually insisted upon having in the servants, while I stood upon a sideboard and recited my speech. Crampton strove to encourage me by bowing repeatedly and very low whenever I looked at him, while Crow wept behind her pocket-handkerchief. I survived the ordeal.

Meantime I saw a good deal of the brothers; for though Henry's dread of aunt Dunk always caused him to avoid her, and though, as she herself informed me, my ugly face had cured Charles of the trick of dropping in at all hours, I met them constantly in my walks. It was my one pleasure. Henry adopted me at once as sister and friend, showed me the photograph of the girl he was to marry, and ere long confided to me his troubles about his brother, who, from being the best companion in the world, had grown silent and morose, and was always running up to London for the night. It was true; even I could see that he was not the same Charles who had excited my envy on the night of my arrival at Dunk Marsh. He would walk with us for an hour at a time without speaking; and when the subject turned on Mr. Williamson and my training, he invariably quitted us abruptly. 'He is awfully worried about you, Miss Pellam. He thinks it is all his fault,' said Henry. I was of the same opinion; and moreover, I feared that he was increasing the evil. Though his desultory calls had ceased, 'Mr. Charles wishes to see you, ma'am,' was a message to which my aunt was called upon to respond more than once; and after these private conferences there was a sensible increase of energy on her part with regard to my speech; from which I inferred that he was still trying to persuade her to give up the idea. I wished he would talk to me about it, and not to her. But with me he never alluded to it, though his manner was almost deprecating. This silence heightened the interest of our intercourse, and my heart beat fast on the days when I saw his tall dark figure advancing under the shadow of the fir-trees in the wood-walk; faster than it beat when Henry's form met my eye instead.

It was within three or four days of the meeting. Aunt Dunk was gone to Crippleton, and I was walking up and down the wood-



walk with my hated speech in my hand, when Charles Treyhen stood before me. He had been away, and we had not met for some days.

'Miss Pellam,' said he with such a smile on his face as I had never seen before, 'it is all right; I have good news for you. You will not have to speak. It is all at an end.'

The relief was so intense that I burst into tears.

'Am I fated to annoy you?' said he sadly.

'Annoy me! I am only too happy, too grateful. But aunt Dunk?'

'Aunt Dunk must not know. I was resolved you should never be subjected to such an insult. I have moved heaven and earth to get some one to take your place, and I have secured the services of a lady accustomed to public-speaking. But aunt Dunk must not be told; she would only be the more resolved to persevere. Up to the last you must submit. Only on the very day, about an hour before you ought to be setting out, a messenger from Mr. Williamson will announce the arrival of this lady, and her intention of speaking. Even if aunt Dunk persists in coming on, I shall be there, Miss Pellam, and I give you my word that you shall not be so much as asked to put your foot upon the platform.'

I could not thank him; I had no voice. But I held out my hand with brimming eyes, and he did not give it back to me at once. For a moment there was silence, and then he was on the point of speaking again, when 'Jane, Jane, where are you?' resounded through the air in aunt Dunk's harshest tones. I fled, and Charles Treyhen vanished as suddenly as he had appeared.

I saw him no more before the eventful day, but my speech often faded from my mind as I sat musing over that last interview in the wood-walk, feeling again the grasp of his hand, and wondering what he was about to say when aunt Dunk interrupted us.

The day came. In spite of his assurance, it was impossible not to feel nervous, as the hours dragged their weary length along. If I could but see him for one moment, to hear again that solemn promise of protection! But it rained steadily all day, and aunt Dunk would not hear of my going out. We were to dine at five and start at six, for the lecture was to commence at seven. How eagerly I watched the door all dinner-time, as I vainly attempted to swallow a morsel! Crampton was constantly coming in and out with the same expression of stolid indifference on his face. There was no note, no message. Could he fail me at the last? I grew giddy at the thought; but I recalled his eager words, his manner, and my doubts were lulled. Only lulled; for when we went into the drawing-room it wanted but ten minutes of six, and still there was no letter. How I longed to arrest the course of those pitiless hands advancing so rapidly towards the fatal hour! I would have walked about the room to quiet my impatience, but my limbs seemed weighted with lead, and I could only sit and shiver, and watch aunt Dunk at her merciless

netting, until roused by the sound of the carriage wheels on the gravel. 'He has forgotten me,' said Reason; but my heart answered 'Impossible.' As I followed aunt Dunk to the carriage, Crow touched my shoulder.

'Here, my dear; a bit of a note.'

It was my first letter from Charles Treyhen.

'Do not be frightened. Miss C— is detained at ——— till the last train. I am off to meet her. We shall be in time; but *delay* as much as you can.'

'Delay!' I to delay aunt Dunk! How could it be done? I lingered in the hall; I dropped my glove; but aunt Dunk called angrily, and, sick at heart, cold and trembling, I rushed to join her. That drive! Shall I ever forget it? Surely aunt Dunk must have heard the beating of my heart! I looked at the people going home from their work, and I envied them, wondering vaguely if they would rescue me if I called to them. I looked at aunt Dunk's comely face, and I wondered how it would look if I died at her feet. And then I went off into wondering still more vaguely why she left that bit of gray hair above her black front, and in my mind I kept on trying to close the space, until we drove into Crippleton. It all seemed unreal; and when the carriage stopped at the Townhall, I felt that it was all happening to somebody else and not to me. I stumbled up the narrow staircase after aunt Dunk, and into the small retiring-room set apart for performers. Mr. Williamson was waiting for us. We were late, and the audience was impatient; we could plainly hear them thumping and hissing. He only stopped to show us where to stand so as to hear the few words he had to utter before I made my appearance, and then he went on. Without regarding aunt Dunk's commands, I dragged myself to a window, and looked up and down the street. It was my last hope. A clergyman walked past. I tried to open the window, to scream to him for help, but I had no voice. Aunt Dunk dragged me back.

'Child, child, they are waiting for you. Hark! they are applauding.'

The horrid sound fell on my ears. I dropped on my knees, I clasped her arm, I implored her pity. My voice came back, but it was hoarse and grating. Aunt Dunk looked alarmed. Even her florid cheeks grew a shade paler as Mr. Williamson appeared.

'Quick, quick! is she ready? The audience is impatient.'

'Jane, I insist. Don't be a fool.'

Then hope died. I knew he had forgotten me. With a sudden calmness, which surprised myself as much as my tormentors, I rose, walking steadily forward as if in a dream. I was through the doorway and on the platform before Mr. Williamson could overtake me. The dreaded moment had arrived. The glare of light surrounded



me; the sea of upturned faces was before me, all eyes were fixed upon me; there was a burst of welcome, and then a sudden hush. They were waiting for me to speak; waiting for the speech which the fir-trees in the wood-walk and the poplars in the water-meadows had heard so often; and my mind was a blank save for the one thought, the one recollection—Charles Treyhen had forgotten me. Mr. Williamson seized my hand to lead me to the front; with a rapid gesture I snatched it away, and turning suddenly, caught sight of Charles Treyhen himself, as, with a face of agony, he fought his way towards me through the crowd. For one second I stood motionless; then darting forward with a scream which echoed through the room, I fell forward into his arms, as he sprang upon the platform just in time to catch me.

‘My darling, my poor darling!’

It was whispered in my ear, and then I heard no more—I was unconscious. I was afterwards told, that aunt Dunk herself supplied my place in an impromptu speech of great originality and energy, and that the roars of laughter and applause which she called forth did not please her half as much as the hisses elicited by the discovery that she had forced me to appear against my will.

### CHAPTER III.

#### AUNT DUNK ON AGUE.

For many days life was a blank to me. I was taken back to Dunk Marsh that night, because the doctor who was immediately summoned declared that it would be at the risk of my life. Aunt Dunk knew better, and she took me back to delirium and Crow. When the former left me, I was weak as a baby; and the latter informed me that my fatal speech had been constantly upon my lips; that Mr. Treyhen and Mr. Charles called several times a day to ask after me; and that aunt Dunk persisted in asserting that I was suffering from a slight cold in the head. I began to mend, and from that day, all danger being over, aunt Dunk expressed the greatest anxiety on my behalf; assuring me that my state was most critical, nearly worrying me out of my life with suggestions and remedies, and trying to make me do everything the doctor had forbidden.

My illness was by my aunt pronounced in succession to be nervous, typhus, scarlet, and brain fever, and treated accordingly. The rights of woman were neglected for the study of medicine; the right of being quiet in illness was more especially overlooked. Unfortunately, aunt Dunk adopted the theory that like cures like, and when she decided that my malady was nervous, she administered a succession of shocks calculated to try the nerves of the most robust. She would dart at me suddenly after a profound silence, pluck away a pillow, startle me out of a quiet sleep, let a tray fall, or slam a door.

The effect was such, that in two days she was able triumphantly to assert that 'the fever was on the move. It had changed its character to brain. No sign could be more favourable.' She now prescribed a ceaseless course of *Whately's Logic*, and with that soothing word resting under my feeble hand, and Crow by my side, I was left alone for hours. The régime suited me; and aunt Dunk, more than ever satisfied with her treatment, dismissed the doctor.

At last I was able to come down-stairs, and in time I crept out in the sun. I was taking my second walk with still tottering step when Henry and Charles Treyhen approached. Aunt Dunk, who stumped beside me with terrible energy, called out, 'She's not well to-day, boys; weaker by ever so much than she was yesterday. I declare, I shouldn't wonder if she slept through our fingers after all.'

My cheeks and eyes gave the lie to her words, and Charles answered with something of his old manner: 'I am delighted to hear it; we were really anxious, as long as you assured us Miss Pella was improving daily, and that nothing ailed her but a slight cold of the head.'

And then aunt Dunk did the very last thing she would have done had she entertained the slightest suspicion of the state of affairs. She desired Charles to give me his arm.

'She is to take fourteen turns in the sun, and I'm going to take Henry to see my pigs; they are the finest fellows I've seen for a long time.'

She marched off with Henry, saying, 'Nothing is so bracing for you boys as to do what you don't like. You'd go forty miles round to avoid me any day, and Charles hates nothing more than dancing attendance on a silly girl without an idea in her head; wonder what they'll find to say.'

We heard every word, and it was impossible not to smile.

My hand was resting on Charles Treyhen's arm, and before we had taken two turns out of the fourteen, he had asked me if it might not stay there for life. What foolish things people do say sometimes to be sure! but it did as well as anything else. I understood him perfectly well, and I think he understood me too, though I said something still more odd, and apparently senseless.

'Wait till I get to the bench, please,' was all I could say; and he did wait. And then he said a great deal that I cannot repeat, but I was very happy, although tears were raining through my thin fingers. He got hold of my hand at last, and asked me if I would answer him one word. I did manage to look up then, and to say 'If I were aunt Dunk, I suppose I should say, "Decidedly not, Mr. Treyhen."' He was quite satisfied, and we sat there till aunt Dunk's voice was heard in the distance. It was a fortunate thing for me that her voice always preceded her. I do not think she had been



gone long, but we had had time to determine that she must not be told of our engagement until I was strong enough to bear the extra persecution which she would have every right to inflict.

Whether it was from sitting on that bench, I know not, but the next morning Crow had to inform aunt Dunk that I was shivering in the first stage of ague. Aunt Dunk immediately denied the possibility, on the ground that there had never been a case in the house, although the district was an aguish one. After which she arose and came to look at me. There could be no doubt. My teeth were chattering till the very bed shook. With her accustomed promptitude of action, aunt Dunk seized me by the shoulders and shook me violently. Crow cried out for mercy, and I—fainted away.

Aunt Dunk eyed me complacently. 'Ha, I thought that would stop it; like cures like, never fails.'

Crow could hardly conceal her indignation, but my aunt walked cheerfully away, putting her head in at the door again to say, 'Call me at once, Crow, if the fit returns. I've long wanted a case of ague under my own eye.'

As soon as she could leave me, Crow sought her firm ally Crampton, and the result of their deliberations was, that the latter marched off to the rectory and dispatched Charles Treyhen to the manor-house. He found my aunt up to her elbows in books of medicine.

'She's got it, Charles—she's got the ague. Never was anything more fortunate. It's a clear case. Just what I've been wanting. I know exactly how to treat it.'

'Of course, it is so common about here. It would be absurd to have a doctor for such a trifle.'

'I don't see anything absurd in having a doctor if you are ill. It is the proper thing to do.'

'Not for mere ague.'

'Mere ague, as you are pleased to call it, is the most dangerous thing you can have. It leads to many fatal diseases.'

'You don't really mean that, aunt Dunk?' said Charles in real alarm.

'Don't I? What should you know about ague, I should like to know? Why, I had it before you were born, and shall have it again after you are dead, as likely as not. It always leaves a weakness in the constitution and generally a tendency to decline, or paralysis, or lumbago. I don't half like the girl's looks, and I've half a mind to have Dr. Belton back to look at her.'

A little more discussion, and Dr. Belton was sent for. Apparently he understood the case, for though declining to blame the shaking, he considered that the one already given was sufficient. He did not wish it repeated, and my aunt, satisfied with what she called his approval, allowed me to take his prescriptions. The ague was obstinate. Although the attacks were less violent each time,

they still returned, and change of air was pronounced indispensable. Dr. Belton was wise enough to desire Crow to inform my aunt of his opinion, which she did, with comments of her own upon the needlessness of such a step. The result took us all by surprise.

That evening, Henry and Charles Treyhen having walked up after dinner, aunt Dunk stood for some time netting vigorously in perfect silence. We felt that something was impending. It came at last.

'Now my mind's made up. The girl must be doing something. Ay, you all thought I'd forgotten about her profession, I'll be bound. But I've not. She's not the stuff for a lecturer. But work she must for her daily bread.' Charles and I exchanged glances of amusement. 'I've long thought a lady courier might make a good living. I shall shut up this house, and take you to travel, Jane. We'll go to Bolong, and if we like that, and you get on as should be, we'll go on to Rome and Jerusalem. That's settled and done.

Nobody spoke. Henry was smothering his laughter, and Charles his indignation. Aunt Dunk went on netting and talking vehemently for the rest of the evening. She had arranged it all, and there was no appeal.

After this I was most anxious to tell her of our engagement, but Henry strongly advised us to wait, and even Anne, to whom I had written at once, offered the same advice. Scarlet fever at home made it impossible for her to receive me, and I had nowhere else to go, should aunt Dunk turn me out, as was very likely to be the case. I did not like the concealment. It seemed like treachery to be living at her expense, and keeping her in ignorance of my prospects. But I was overruled, and the preparations for our journey continued.

The house was entirely dismantled, the pictures taken down, the carpets rolled up. Aunt Dunk, who for upwards of thirty years had never passed a night away from the manor-house, announced an intended absence of years; which made us all hopeful that a month would find her at home again. She made her will, let the ground up to the hall-door, and her only remaining difficulty was how to dispose of the family plate and diamonds. She was advised to leave the former in Crampton's charge, and to deposit the latter at her banker's. She accordingly left the plate at the bank, and decided upon taking her diamonds with her.

'Henry, I want a pair of your boots; the shabbiest and thickest you've got,' said she one evening.

Henry could only assent, but Charles dared to ask the reason why.

'For my di'monds, of course; I shall stow them away inside. Nobody would dream of stealing old boots. I shall leave them about in perfect safety, whereas no lock and key will keep out.'



The boots will make people think we've got a man with us too; and now I think of it, you may send up an old shooting suit as well, Henry. I'll leave it about the room where we stop, and it will keep those rascally Frenchmen from robbing us. They are born thieves, I'll be bound.'

The next preparation was still more eccentric. In contemplation of the possibility of war breaking out before our return, I was desired to cut out and prepare a quantity of plain work, to be done in the French prison, where we should probably pass some years. I was also to learn by heart several pieces of music, though why it was to be supposed that we should be allowed a piano, and deprived of music to play, I could not understand. Finally, large stores of groceries from Crippleton were packed to accompany us, aunt Dunk declining to believe that tea and coffee were known in France.

Our party consisted of aunt Dunk, Crow, and myself: Crampton was left to kill and eat the hares. We travelled only to Folkestone the first day, and were to have slept at the Pavilion. But matters turned out differently.

As soon as we arrived, aunt Dunk walked briskly out into the town, and edified the men idling about near the harbour by darting among them, and asking what was the chief article of commerce in the town, and for what it was principally remarkable. They stared, grinned, and were so long in answering, that my aunt walked on rapidly, remarking, 'A parcel of stupid Frenchmen, every man John of them!'

We joined the *table-d'hôte* that evening; but aunt Dunk could find nothing to her taste, and complained loudly enough to attract general attention.

'I declare I believe it's frogs already, Jane. One expects it the other side of the water, but I did hope for a joint here, I must say.'

Presently she electrified me by calling a waiter and desiring him to send her maid out to buy a chop.

'Mrs. Dunk's maid—Mrs. Dunk of Dunk Marsh—and tell her to cook them, as she knows how, over my bedroom fire, and to bring them here at once. I don't care to go up-stairs, for I want my niece to see the world.'

The waiter bowed; I coloured crimson, and lost all appetite; the company kindly pretended not to hear. But the mutton-chops came not. Aunt Dunk grew angry, and repeated the order in a voice which suspended all other conversation.

The *maitre d'hôtel* now himself appeared. He was extremely sorry the lady was not satisfied. Would it not be better to order something in her own apartment?

'Why, bless your heart, man, what does it matter to you where I eat? I have ordered my maid to cook a chop up-stairs and bring e.'

'So I understand, madam; but it is against rules to allow cooking in the bedrooms. In a house like this it would never do.'

'Why, is not this an hotel?'

'Certainly, madam.'

'And do you mean to say we are not to do as we like in the rooms we pay for? Suppose I choose to fry onions in my room; I'd like to know what you'd do to stop it.'

The man glanced appealingly at the company. 'I should respectfully request you to leave off.'

'Then I should fry them all the faster.'

There was a roar of laughter at these words; for it is needless to remark that, during this colloquy, every head had been turned one way, all eyes fixed upon us. I was ready to sink into the earth, and was unable to refrain from whispered entreaties that my aunt would be silent.

'What are you pulling at my gown for, child? Can't you let me alone? D'ye suppose I don't know what I'm about?' said she, suddenly turning upon me.

Unable to endure more, I fled precipitately, and sought our own apartments in tears. She followed me ere long, fuming with rage.

'I never was so insulted, Jane; I'll not break bread in the house. We'll go by the night boat.'

I begged for a cup of tea, for I had eaten nothing. Permission was granted, on condition that Crow made it herself from our Cripplepton stores. The expression of the waiter's face, when he found us in the very act of unpacking and making the tea, was one of unmitigated contempt; and as I did not feel sure that we were not rendering ourselves amenable to the laws of the land, I was relieved at finding no opposition offered to us.

It was a sad beginning. I sipped my tea, with difficulty repressing my tears, and aunt Dunk walked up and down the room in a state of intense irritability with everything and everybody, feeling the want of her dinner and of her netting. Suddenly a woman's voice under the window began to sing 'Willy, we have missed you.'

'O that dreadful woman! why must she come squalling here? I wish she was "Willy," and altogether missing under the waves,' exclaimed aunt Dunk; and ringing the bell violently, she ordered the waiter to send that woman away, and to tell her she would not have her prowling about the house at that time of night.

'Yes, ma'am; certainly, ma'am. But I'm afraid I can't send her off, ma'am. The young gentlemen next door, No. 42, they are paying of her, and calling for another song.'

'My compliments to the gentlemen—Mrs. Dunk of Dunk Marsh's compliments—and I can't let that noise go on.'

'Yes, ma'am; certainly, ma'am.' And from the roars of laughter



next door, I imagine that the message was delivered. The singing, however, continued.

'This is unbearable,' said aunt Dunk. 'I've often heard English travellers called bears, but I could not have believed they would be as bad as this. I must put a stop to it at once.' And she again pulled the bell.

The waiter reappeared.

'Did you deliver my message to those gentlemen?' demanded my aunt sternly.

'Yes, ma'am; certainly, ma'am.'

'And what did they say? Now speak the truth, mind.'

'They didn't make no particular answer, ma'am.'

'I don't believe it. Who are they? what are they?'

'Well, ma'am, they is two young gents from London, ma'am; quite young.'

'I didn't ask where they came from; I want to know their names.'

'Names, ma'am? Yes, ma'am; certainly, ma'am. I'll inquire.'

'Bless the man, what is he talking about! D'ye think I'm a fool? D'ye mean to try and make me believe you don't know the names of the people that come to this house?'

'Well, ma'am, they comes and goes so fast that we often does not hear their names. But these is quite young gents, ma'am; quite young. Not a day over sixteen, I should say, either of them.'

'Boys,' exclaimed my aunt in supreme contempt, 'mere boys, and no one to look after them, of course. I'll soon give them a piece of my mind. Here, waiter, open the door and announce me—Mrs. Dunk of Dunk Marsh. That screeching is not to be borne.'

My entreaties were disregarded, and she marched off, preceded by the waiter, who, throwing open the door, announced her name and title in tones rendered indistinct by smothered laughter. I caught sight of two young men at an open window. They started up as my aunt appeared—astonishment plainly written on their faces.

'I've come to tell you you ought to be ashamed of yourselves,' began aunt Dunk at once. 'A couple of lads like you keeping that poor creature out in the cold, disturbing the whole house, and annoying the neighbourhood with her screeching and squalling. If you don't stop it at once, I'll complain to the authorities.'

'Pray do not trouble yourself, madam,' said the younger of the two; 'we will have her in at once, since that is your wish.'

'My wish! how dare you say such a thing! You know perfectly well I only want her to go home, and you two to go off to bed. Why, you ought both to have been in bed and asleep an hour ago. A couple of lads like you; I wonder you are let to go about alone.'

'You are too kind, madam. We want words to express our gratitude.'

Through the open door I could plainly see their faces, the expression of which alarmed me. Astonishment was fast giving place to a keen appreciation of the fun, nor did the fact escape me of their being some years older than the waiter, for reasons best known to himself, had represented them. In an agony of fear I could no longer refrain from a whisper, intended for her ear alone. 'Aunt Dunk, aunt Dunk, O, please come back!' It was overheard.

'Aunt Dunk!' exclaimed one of the young men. 'Surely this is not my dearest, my most revered aunt Dunk! Do I indeed address her? This is an unlooked-for happiness.'

'The boat will be off in twenty minutes, ma'am. There is no time to lose.'

Never was news more welcome.

'Tell the captain to wait for me—not to start till Mrs. Dunk of Dunk Marsh is on board, waiter,' said my aunt, making for our rooms, and utterly disregarding the speeches with which her new acquaintance continued to address her.

All was now bustle and confusion, and my relief was great. It was of short duration. We were hardly seated in the boat before the young men walked up to us.

'Dear aunt, I hope I see you comfortable?'

'I'm no aunt of yours, thank goodness.' Aside: 'Wonder if I am, by the bye. He might be one of the Dunks of Slowney or the Hapons of Cave, for aught I know.'

'No aunt of mine! Have you forgotten the incidents of my interesting childhood?—how you dandled me in your arms, taught my young ideas how to shoot, and otherwise worried my young life.'

'You are all wrong. If you'd said your name was Dunk or Hapon I might have believed you, but I never dandled so much as a cat, or taught any one but Jane here. You are an impudent boy, and if you don't make off, I'll call the captain.'

It was unnecessary. A more peremptory commander called for his attention, and for the rest of the voyage we were safe from annoyance from him. He could not boast the same with regard to aunt Dunk. She watched him attentively as he retired with vacillating steps. She never took her eyes off him for full three minutes after he had stretched himself upon a bench, and then, darting towards him, she exclaimed in a voice above winds and waves, 'The boy's sick, I do declare. Decided case; the very thing I wanted under my own eye.'

And under her own eye she kept him during the whole voyage, treating him according to a theory of her own, which consisted in keeping feet and legs warm, and raising them considerably above the level of the head. Boxes and bags, &c., she piled over and under him. He resisted at first, and even attempted to call a sailor to the rescue; but the man had heard him address her a few minutes



before, and really imagining that he was her nephew, only laughed and passed on. My own state soon precluded me from watching them; but whenever I could look round, the same spectacle met my eye—aunt Dunk keeping a strict watch, heaping more and more heavy weights upon his legs, forcibly holding down his head with a heavy hand, and pouring brandy down his throat. Occasionally he made frantic efforts to free himself from the double danger of choking and of being smothered, and she afterwards remarked to me that she was lucky in meeting such a case; it must have been an exceptional one, as she had never read of convulsions in sea-sickness.

When we arrived at Boulogne, the friend came forward, and laughingly thanking aunt Dunk for her kindness, led off the unhappy victim more dead than alive, and presenting a most deplorable aspect.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### AUNT DUNK ABROAD.

I DO not know how we got to the hotel, or to bed, for aunt Dunk's French comprised some half-dozen words, and my own had breathed no air but that of our schoolroom. I know that next day we found we had taken rooms and ordered breakfast for a party of twelve instead of two, and that we had to pay for the mistake.

Aunt Dunk was much surprised to find that both tea and coffee were known commodities, and that our stores, for which she had had to pay largely at the *douane*, were not regarded more favourably at the French hotel than at the Pavilion. Having some idea of going on to make a long stay in Rome, she thought it best to husband the groceries, and to put up with the national fare at present. Of course neither tea nor coffee could be as good as what we had brought from Crippleton.

After some sleep, we rose, breakfasted, and sallied forth for a walk, aunt Dunk, Crow, and myself; and not knowing where to go, we soon lost ourselves in a nest of most unpleasing streets. The first woman we met gave us a cheerful '*Bon jour*,' which my aunt returned somewhat doubtingly, and then shading her eyes with her hand, turned to look after her.

'Dear me, I ought to know that woman, I suppose, but her face seems strange to me. Very odd.'

We met another and another, and all greeted us in the same manner. A sudden thought struck aunt Dunk. 'Why, they must be Crippleton girls, married and settled here. They know me of course by sight, though I don't know them. Very odd if I find a Crippleton colony out here, Jane.' But as the greetings continued, she grew puzzled. 'I can't have forgotten so many faces, Jane, and they wouldn't all remember me. I can't make it out at all.'

I suggested that civility might be the custom of the country.

'Nonsense, child! Do you suppose they'd be fools enough to go curtsying to all strangers, and in a seaport town too, where strangers are as plentiful as pins? I know what it is. It's the name. Your uncle's ancestors came from Holland, and I daresay some popped over here. Dunk is a name well enough known over the sea. Depend upon it they've seen it on our boxes, or maybe it's in the paper already.'

For a person given to theories, to using long words and discoursing upon woman's rights, aunt Dunk was singularly simple-minded, and I was in a state of constant surprise at her naïve views of our surroundings. It was necessary to bear in mind how many years she had passed at Dunk Marsh.

In the afternoon she elected to go for a drive, and as the waiter spoke English, we were able to make known to the driver the first place we wished to visit—a chemist's shop. We did not get out. A man came to the door, and my aunt gave him a prescription to be made up. He retreated, and we sat still, expecting the carriage to go on. In vain.

'Tell him to go on,' said aunt Dunk; and Crow, putting her head out of the window, gave the order in excellent English. In vain. Aunt Dunk herself now made the attempt. She thrust her head out of the right-hand window, and ejaculated in a loud voice, '*Cochon, vont!*' In vain. The coachman sat doggedly still, either enjoying the joke or not recognising as his own the somewhat peculiar appellation. Aunt Dunk now tried the other window, with another loud '*Vont, cochon!*' Still in vain; and we might have passed hours in this unpleasant position, had not our friends of the Pavilion suddenly appeared on the scene.

'Aunt Dunk in difficulties!' exclaimed my aunt's *ci-devant* victim, darting forward. 'Can I in gratitude be of any service to the best of relatives?'

'So you are out again,' said aunt Dunk, eyeing him professionally. 'How d'ye feel? Any pains about you? System shaken?'

'Fearfully, aunt, fearfully. I doubt if I shall ever entirely recover from the effects of that voyage.'

'Ay, ay, you were pretty bad. I don't know what you would have done without me. What you want now is a tonic. Come up to me at ten to-morrow and I'll give you one.'

At that precise moment our eccentric driver took it into his head to start off at a rapid trot, probably urged thereto by a vigorous poke from the umbrella of the worthy Crow, whose horror of our new acquaintance was unbounded. Aunt Dunk had only time to shout out the name of her hotel.

The next day was Sunday, and at an early hour aunt Dunk, dressed in her best, was seated at the window, ready to make her observations on men and things, and guarded on each side



Bible and a book of sermons. Presently a rumbling sound was heard. 'Why, I declare, here's a carriage coming wickeding along on a Sunday. I do believe these French have no consciences whatever.'

A card was put into her hands: Mr. Brett and Mr. Liddess wished to have the honour of waiting on her. I believe aunt Dunk thought it was the mayor and corporation with an address, in compliment to the well-known name of Dunk; for her countenance fell when the young men of the Pavilion entered.

'O, it's only you, is it? Come for your medicine, I suppose? Jane, fetch the stuff.'

It was an embarrassing reception, and I was glad to see that the young men so felt it, for they advanced considerably abashed. The scene was less favourable to impudence than either the street, the steamboat, or their own apartment at the Pavilion, and they evidently felt the influence of aunt Dunk's manner and Sunday attire. I now perceived that my aunt's victim was much younger than the other; in fact, probably numbering few years more than had been awarded to him by the English waiter. Their rank of life I imagine to have been that of the upper class of tradespeople. I considered that we were fortunate; matters might have been worse.

They came to propose to my aunt to take a drive, and I felt that we had no right to be surprised, after the manner in which she had treated them. Moreover, the proposal was made with due deference, and was evidently the result of a determined resolution on the part of the younger, whose improved behaviour and constant reference to his friend plainly showed that he had been receiving a lecture.

It was a lottery how the idea of a drive in such company would be received. Had I possessed more command of countenance, it is probable the dignity of Mrs. Dunk of Dunk Marsh would have been insulted. But my dislike was too plainly visible, and although she declined to drive on a Sunday, and severely lectured them upon the sinfulness of such a course, she graciously consented to allow them to accompany us the next day. After they were gone, I was foolish enough to remonstrate. I ventured to ask if she thought it quite wise to make the acquaintance of two men of whom we knew positively nothing, excepting that they, or at least one of them, had treated her with considerable insolence. This was quite enough to confirm her in her resolution.

'What are you afraid of, child? They are the civillest lads I ever met; I know what I am about, I can tell you. You don't suppose they are coming after you, eh? You may be easy on that score. If you had a hair's breadth of good looks about you, I'd take care how I took up with any one. But you are as ugly as Crow, and nobody ever looks at you twice. What fools girls are, to be

As usual, I was obliged to submit, and we started for the dreaded drive. Certainly, no fault beyond a certain degree of vulgarity could now be found with the young men. Mr. Brett, my aunt's *ci-devant* victim, devoted himself to her, evidently appreciating her peculiarities to the utmost; Mr. Liddess hardly spoke at all. Still it was a relief to hear that they were starting for Rome the next day.

'Rome!' said my aunt. 'Why, what business can you have there? Idling away your time, I'll be bound.'

On the contrary, they meant to work very hard: they were artists.

'Artists!' exclaimed aunt Dunk, in profound disgust. 'Well, I did think better of you than that. That's always an excuse for doing nothing. Don't tell me; I know all about it. Boy sketches grandfather's nose when he ought to be doing his lessons: wonderful talent! Boy grows up; sees a rabbit sitting; sketches him when he ought to be working for his bread; painter passes by; collars him; drags him off to London; other painters set at him; make him do it again; give him coats and boots if he's poor, orders for theatre if he isn't. Boy takes to daubing and to evil courses, dabbling away his best years among dirty colours with a nasty smell; doing no good to any one. Pshaw!'

The young men laughed and protested.

'Here is a living contradiction to your assertions,' said Mr. Brett.

'Liddess has maintained his mother and sister for some years.'

'Then his father ought to be ashamed of himself for allowing it.'

'My father died eight years ago, and my poor mother was quite crushed by his loss. She has never ceased to mourn for him.'

'Then *she* ought to be ashamed of herself. I've no patience with people who go widowing on for ever. It's no compliment to one's husband, wearing weeds more than a year, for it only looks as if one had forgotten how long it is since he died. I did my duty, and no more, by the late Mr. Dunk. I wore my weeds one year to the day, and very hot and heavy I found the caps; and then I widowed off in second caps—ribbons and all that; and a great relief I found it, and I'd like to hear Mr. Dunk say that wasn't enough for him or anybody else.'

At this moment the carriage dashed forward; there was a crash, a scramble, and we stopped. The pole was broken; it was impossible to go on. There was a consultation. The distance from Boulogne was not great; Mr. Brett proposed to ride one of the horses into the town for help.

'You shall do no such thing,' said aunt Dunk. 'I'm not going to sit twirling my thumbs in a broken carriage. Jane and I will ride the horses; you can both walk; and the *cochon*, as you call him, can stay with the carriage.'

I protested; my aunt insisted. But such was my terror of a horse that, rather than approach anything so terrible, I would have



left aunt Dunk then and there, and found my way alone to England. For the first and last time my will prevailed. I believe I was never forgiven.

'Well, if you are a fool, you must be a fool,' was the conclusion of the argument; and aunt Dunk turned her attention to mounting her own steed.

Mr. Brett suggested that she should stand upon the carriage-seat, and let him lead the horse alongside.

'D'ye think I can't get up like other people?' retorted my aunt. 'I suppose you think I'm too old. You'll just be pleased to put me up.'

'Not that side, then, if you please.'

'And why not, I should like to know? D'ye think I can't ride either side of a horse like anybody else?'

'But nobody ever does get up on that side.'

'Then I'll show them the way.'

And with some distant idea of the task before her, aunt Dunk stood poised on one leg, holding out the other foot towards Mr. Brett, who, striving to control his hilarity, attempted to put her up. The first effort resulted in failure. Aunt Dunk made a short appearance in the air, and came down upon Mr. Brett's shoulder.

'You did not jump high enough,' and 'You are as weak as a baby, and as awkward as an owl,' urged each performer to the display of more force. Aunt Dunk now rose high in the air, poised for one second on the animal's back, and then to our extreme horror totally disappeared on the opposite side. Mr. Brett and Mr. Liddess literally sat down in the road, helpless with laughter. I flew to her assistance. For one dreadful moment I believed she was dead, and my exclamation brought the young men to my side. She was partially stunned when they raised her, and we all watched her for some minutes with real anxiety. Her first words were most characteristic.

'Now I shall do it again, and nothing shall stop me,' she gasped, and from that moment I felt comparatively easy about her. 'If it had been a proper kind of English horse it wouldn't have happened, Jane. These foreign brutes don't know what they are about, and have no idea of carrying a lady. O dear, my head! What are those two young fools laughing at?'—for, relieved of immediate fear, the young men were unable to restrain their laughter. 'Did they never see a lady fall off her horse before, I wonder?'

'Off, but not over,' said Mr. Brett, striving to command himself.

'But I say off, Mr. Brett, and I am not to be contradicted.'

Nobody was in a state to contradict her, even when after a short rest she insisted upon another attempt. I watched her in fear and trembling, for in addition to my terror of the animal, I thought she was more hurt than she would confess. Nor did I feel easier about her when she was at last mounted, and we were able to start. It

was evident that the motion was more than she could bear. Every step gave her pain, and before we reached the town she alighted and proceeded on foot, declining, however, all assistance. Her unusual silence increased my anxiety, and I was annoyed when she stopped short at the Rue — and insisted upon dismissing our companions. I hardly thought she would have strength to reach the hotel, but an incident which now occurred proved that I had miscalculated her powers.

As we picked our way one behind the other, my aunt, who was first, almost stumbled over a child of about two years of age, sitting upon a doorstep, and with much satisfaction gnawing a most unpleasant lobster. With her usual decision, aunt Dunk seized the unsavoury morsel between her finger and thumb, and threw it away as far as she could. The baby set up a howl, which brought all the neighbours to their doors in time to see the action. A woman rushed forward and snatched up the child, vociferating eagerly and angrily at my aunt.

'Don't be a fool, woman. The child would have choked in a minute. You ought to be ashamed of yourself for letting her pick up such rubbish,' said aunt Dunk, pushing on.

A little crowd collected and followed us, but still aunt Dunk walked on, answering the clamour in excellent English, and apparently much strengthened by the excitement.

Thus accompanied we emerged on the quay, to the astonishment of the well-dressed people who were taking their daily walk. I felt that if our tour were to last much longer, it would go far to shorten my life. The crowd continued to collect and to grow more threatening, and at length one virago went the length of shaking her fist behind aunt Dunk's bonnet. I was trembling in every limb, and though we were within a hundred yards of the hotel, I felt that my limbs would not carry me so far. At that moment, to my unspeakable relief and joy, a tall dark form emerged from the doorway, and pushing through the crowd, held out his arm just as I was on the point of falling.

'Charles Treyhen!' exclaimed my aunt, standing stock-still, utterly regardless of the gesticulations of the crowd. 'What earthly business have you here, I should like to know?'

'The business of rescuing you from this turbulent mob.'

'Tut, tut, tut! we want none of your rescuings. As if I cared a snap of the finger for all the hop-o'-my-thumb Frenchmen that ever were born! What a noise they do make to be sure, and what a pack of fools they are! Here, *gettez out vous!*' she continued, once more addressing the mob, and then, as calm as if in her own garden at home, she walked on and entered the hotel.

It was too delightful. Charles was come with every intention of remaining with us, if only aunt Dunk could be induced to consent,



and that she must consent we were both fully resolved. He justly considered her a most inefficient guardian, and when he had heard our short but eventful history, he was not at all inclined to alter his opinion.

We had ample time to discuss the matter, for aunt Dunk walked straight to her room, declining my company, and did not reappear for some time. When she returned, her first question was why had Charles come.

'Well, I have got my duty done for a while, and mean to take a rest.'

'You don't suppose you are coming on with us, I hope. Men are always in the way.'

'So I have heard you say before, aunt Dunk, and it certainly never entered my head that you would ask me to go with you.'

'And why not, I should like to know? How do you think the girl looks?' she added, with startling abruptness.

'Well—better, I think, aunt Dunk; certainly better.'

'Then she's not better at all, so that's all you know about the matter; she loses strength every hour. Bolong don't agree with her at all.'

'You will go on then, I suppose, to Paris?'

'Now why should you suppose any such thing? What nonsense you do talk! It's as plain as a pikestaff that the girl must go home. If Bolong don't agree with her, what earthly use is there in taking her to Paris, or Rome, or Jerusalem, eh?'

It was one of those questions to which no answer suggests itself, and we remained silent.

Aunt Dunk continued: 'My mind's made up—I'm going to take her home. I mean to give her up altogether; I've done my best for her. I've tried to train her for two professions, and she has failed in both. She's wilful and helpless, and she can't speak a word more French than she did when we left England, and she looks more white and sickly than ever. I've tried abroad, and abroad has failed. She's fit for nothing but to be married, and there's no chance of that, with that face of hers; and if there was, I'm not going to be bothered with it. The sooner she goes back to her sisters, the better.'

In this at least we both concurred, though completely taken by surprise at the announcement. Mollified by my immediate submission, she was able to confess that her bones ached very much from her fall; and we rightly judged that she felt really ill enough to wish to be at home again. That she was ill and suffering there could be no doubt; for she allowed Charles to make all arrangements for our departure without opposition, shut herself up in her room during the short remainder of our stay, and when with us hardly spoke at all. Both Crow and I were seriously alarmed;

and I believe Crow went the length of telling her that there was not a good doctor to be found in Boulogne, in the hope that aunt Dunk would immediately send for one.

We were once more at Dunk Marsh, our foreign tour having lasted as many days as the number of years my aunt had allotted to it. Aunt Dunk had now no crotchets, no hobby, but the chronic one of giving an animated 'No' to all things; and, alas, even this 'no' had lost much of its animation. I had for long perceived that it had been a comfort to her to lay aside the 'Rights of Women'. From the day of my failure at the Townhall that subject had barely been mentioned, and the study of medicine had been taken up in a more natural and congenial manner. Long words and complicated sentences were not natural to her, and a return to her usual abrupt style of speech had been a relief to her. But there was now a still more marked change. Her old energy and activity had vanished; she grew more and more silent; she no longer stood up to meet me, and it was plain that she suffered much. The Treyhens, as well as Crampton and Crow, tried every means to induce her to see a doctor, but in vain; and we were forced to see her fading away before our very eyes, and were powerless to help her.

One day a Mrs. Melton called. The distances from house to house were so great in that neighbourhood, that morning visits were almost unknown; but Mrs. Melton had called once before, soon after I came to Dunk Marsh, and on that occasion aunt Dunk had refused to see her, on the ground that she had missed her vocation. 'She's a clever woman, Jane, and she's missed the glorious destiny of woman in the nineteenth century, and has been fool enough to marry. She's a mere mother of children—nothing more—more fool she.' Now, however, aunt Dunk admitted her at once, and received her with an absence of contempt which was quite touching. Mrs. Melton asked after me, neither she nor aunt Dunk perceiving that I was sitting in the farthest window. I was on the point of coming forward, when my attention was arrested by the next sentence. 'I suppose I may venture to congratulate you on Mr. Trehen's engagement to Miss Pellam. Such a charming match!'

'My nephew engaged to Jane Pellam! Why, what stuff is that woman talking?' said aunt Dunk, with some of her old fire. 'The girl only came because she's too ugly to marry; and as for Henry, such nonsense never entered his brains.'

I was thankful that the recollection of Charles did not enter hers. Mrs. Melton apologised, and soon after took her leave. The idea, however, rankled. That evening aunt Dunk regarded me steadily for some time, and then said abruptly,

'You are not fool enough to dream of fancying that Henry is going to marry you?'

I coloured crimson, and indignantly repudiated the idea.



'O,' said aunt Dunk. After half an hour's silence she added, 'That's settled and done.' After this, Charles and I agreed that she must no longer be kept in ignorance of our engagement. It was not decided which of us was to tell her, therefore it is not surprising that I should imagine Charles had done so, when she suddenly exclaimed the next day, after one of the long silences now become habitual to her, 'Jane, you are a poor creature, and fit for nothing but to be married, so I've made up my mind that you shall marry the boy at once.'

The episode of the day before had faded from my mind. I thought only of Charles, and I thanked her with warmth.

She eyed me rather strangely, and as if surprised, and said, 'Well, you are just like the rest of them, in spite of your ugly face. Girls are girls, go where you will. Now mind, I'm not going to be bothered. Neither of you must mention the subject in my hearing. You may be married here if you like, the sooner the better. I shall be glad when you are gone; but I'll have no fuss, no favours, no bridesmaids, no breakfast. Crampton and Crow may settle it all; I won't hear anything about it.'

I promised cheerfully, hardly able to believe that the long-dreaded task was over, and that no opposition was to be feared. Charles was away: he had gone to town that morning, intending to be absent a few days. It was provoking. I should have preferred telling the news to writing it, and I rather wondered that he had not already told it to me; for I imagined he must have seen aunt Dunk after parting with me the day before. On consideration I concluded that, as was to be expected, he had nothing to report but vehement opposition, and that aunt Dunk had afterwards changed her mind. It was too late to write that day, and the events of the night rendered it altogether unnecessary. At midnight I was hastily summoned by Crow. Aunt Dunk was alarmingly ill. On our own responsibility we sent for Dr. Belton, and summoned Charles by telegraph. By the time the former arrived, my aunt was sufficiently recovered to refuse to see him, and to enjoy calling us fools for sending for him. She was, however, still very ill when Charles appeared, and my news was hastily communicated, for I could not leave her for long at a time. In a few days she rallied considerably; and although the greatest part of her time was spent in her room, she came down to her meals, which however passed in perfect silence. She seemed unable to bear even the presence of 'the boys,' and all their attentions were repulsed, though mine were silently accepted. One day she abruptly asked when I was to be married; and on hearing that no time had been fixed, she desired that I would settle it at once. 'If I couldn't do it myself, Crampton and Crow might do it for me.' I was very reluctant to think of leaving her in her present state, but she insisted, and an early day was fixed for the wedding.

Very lonely I felt in my preparations, and I longed for Anne but the still lingering fever made the presence of any of my sister impossible. No one dared to suggest to aunt Dunk that some lad should be asked to lend me her support on the eventful day; and it was only the morning before the wedding that aunt Dunk desired me to write to Mrs. Melton, and request her attendance. 'I'm very bad, my dear; I'm going to bed,' said my aunt. She had never called me 'my dear' before. She looked wretchedly ill, and I felt very anxious about her, as I sat by her side far into the night. The next morning Crow came to me in tears. Aunt Dunk sent me her love—the first and last she ever sent—she had had a bad night and had rather not see me; but she meant to be down-stairs to receive us when we came from church.

It was a sad wedding; for the crying, which was all done by Crampton and Crow, was more for one lying sick and helpless at home than for the bride; and my own heart was divided, for in her bravely-borne suffering I had learned to love aunt Dunk in spite of her eccentricities. On our return we found her standing at her netting, dressed as usual, and making a feeble effort to work.

Charles led me forward. 'Here she is, aunt Dunk; my wife thanks to you.'

The netting dropped from her hands. She gazed at us in utter astonishment. 'Your wife! How dare you say so? She's no such thing.'

'What on earth do you mean?' Charles spoke fiercely, drawing my hand under his arm.

Aunt Dunk looked from one to another, as if bewildered. 'Your wife! your wife! Where's Henry? O Jane, you wicked girl. You said you were to marry Henry—not Charles. O my heart—'

She staggered to the sofa, and a fearful change passed over her face. She gasped for breath. We gathered round her, and Charles tried to support her, but she pushed him away. Crampton's white face appeared among us.

'Let me send for the doctor, ma'am. Let him come now,' said he imploringly, not daring, even at such a moment, to give an order without the consent of his mistress.

'No, no, no,' gasped my aunt. 'It's no—business—of yours—but you've been—a good—good—good—old fool to me.'

For a few minutes there was a dead silence, broken only by her labouring breath and Crow's subdued sobs. Then suddenly collecting all her strength, aunt Dunk sat bolt upright, and said:

'I'll have nothing to do with it—nothing to do with it; so that's settled and done!' and she fell back—dead.

Thus died aunt Dunk, as she had lived, in direct contradiction to all around her, and at the most inconvenient moment she could have chosen.



## THE PHILOSOPHY OF GRAND HOTELS

BY GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA

To exult over ruins and to cry, 'Joy! joy!' instead of 'Woe! woe!'—as he of old did on the walls of Jerusalem, until an unappreciative auditor, weary with his wailing, flung a stone at his head, whereupon, moaning, 'Woe to myself!' he tumbled over into the ditch, and died—this would seem at the outset to be a very non-natural kind of proceeding. When we stumble upon Ruins, we should fall into profound Meditation, as M. de Volney did; or, if we happen to be of a more practical turn of mind, we should apply ourselves to devising means for abrogating the prevailing decay, and building something new and handsome in its stead. This is how the Americans acted at Chicago, and are acting at Boston, now. The ashes of a 'burnt-up' city are still smoking when the indefatigable Yankees begin to rummage among them, in order to lay the foundations of new brown-stone palaces with marble façades, all six stories high, all warranted fireproof, and all destined to be burned down again when, in accordance with the doctrine of averages, another 'first-class blaze'—as our cousins call that which English penny-a-liners term 'an awful conflagration'—falls due, like a Bill.

There is an abomination of desolation in the heart of west central London, on which very few persons are able to look with common patience, and which, by a great many more, is regarded with passionate indignation:—as a scandal and a disgrace to the wealthiest and most enlightened city in the world. This disreputable place is Leicester-square. It is the most flagrant ruin in the metropolis; it wants pulling down, and rasing, and sowing with salt, and building up again in a thoroughly handsome, decent, and creditable manner. The Alhambra will be burned some of these days, I suppose, and I hope that another edifice of the Alhambra type is *not* fated to rise on its site; but Staggs and Mantle, and the respectable auctioneers and booksellers, and Miss Horne—the most active and obliging little newsvendor in London—will all be able, I trust, to find commodious premises in the Leicester-square of the future. Moreover, I fear that Leicester-square and its environments will, if that be possible, grow dirtier, more disreputable, and more dilapidated than it is at present, until, at least, that Supplemental Metropolitan Railway Company, whose proposals have been recently made public, have got their bill, made their line, and constructed a grand central station at the Piccadilly-circus. Otherwise, I fear that the Company, attracted by the peculiarly tempting position of Leicester-square, *might* accomplish the Herculean task of

acquiring a freehold title thereto, and so lay the first stone of the new station beneath the stomach of the riderless horse. I do not wish to see my Ruin of Ruins converted into a railway terminus even if it should be one as splendid as Mr. Barry's at Charing, or as Sir Gilbert Scott's gigantic *hospitium* at St. Pancras. I want Leicester-square for another purpose. Its central area would be precisely the place for the erection of a GRAND HOTEL.

'What!' I hear you exclaim, 'are there not already sufficient types of the hotel dubbed "Grand" in London? Have we not already the Charing-cross, the Langham, the Grosvenor, the Great Northern, the Inns of Court, the Westminster Palace, the Alexandra, together with the before-mentioned *hospitium* in Domestic Gothic adjoining the Midland Railway station, and which is to be opened next April, with the admirable Mr. Etzensberger, late of the Albergo Vittoria, Venice, as chief manager?' It is of course premature to speak with confidence of what Mr. Etzensberger will be enabled to do with the resources at his command; but it appears to me that we do not yet possess, either in London or the provinces, a single hotel combining *all* the features which I should like to see introduced into an establishment for the shelter and entertainment of travellers. I think that I know the hotels of London pretty well by this time; and I have had, quite recently, extensive experience of a large number of first-class hotels in the provinces, notably Portsmouth, Brighton, Hastings, Eastbourne, Ramsgate, Margate, Tunbridge Wells, York, Harrogate, Scarborough, Leeds, Sheffield and Birmingham. I am acquainted with a number of inns which are structurally 'grand,' or which have been born to grandeur, have achieved it, or have had it thrust upon them in the way of decoration, or prices, or patronage; but I do not yet discern the existence of such a model Grand Hotel as I should desire to see in Leicester-square—an hotel in which should be bound up the very best characteristics of the French, the Swiss-German, and the American systems. Let me, as briefly as I can, state the most marked advantages and disadvantages of these three systems. I must take in justice, the last first; since the American plan must, to a great extent, be considered the parent of the other two.

The 'grandeur' of the Transatlantic hotels, of which one of the earliest was the Astor House, in Broadway, New York, sprang from a very obvious set of causes—the vastness of the country, the sudden development of railway traffic and steam communication, the energy and inventiveness of the people, the scarcity of labour which led hotel-keepers eagerly to avail themselves of mechanical appliances in lieu of human handiwork; and, lastly, the restless vanity and ambition of the Americans—qualities detestable in an old community, but very useful and laudable in a new one—which impelled them to compete with Europe, and if possible to surpass her in every department.



of civilisation. When Cobbett fled to the United States in 1818, he was fain to put-up in a humble inn in New York, no bigger than the Blue Posts on the Common Hard at Portsmouth; and a few years previously Brillat-Savarin, when an exile in the United States, complained that the so-called hotels were the vilest of pothouses. But by the time Charles Dickens made his first Atlantic trip in 1842, the American hotel—on the Atlantic seaboard, at least—had already become a palace; and the St. Nicholas, which Mr. Dickens appeared to consider the lordliest caravanserai in the world, was speedily to be superseded in its prestige by huger and handsomer hotels all over the States. There is no need for me to give a *catalogue raisonné* of these extraordinary travellers' menageries; but I may just mention that so insoluble has been their continuity of development, that even the Fifth-avenue can no longer be considered as the 'grandest' hotel in the Empire City; and that the very vastest and newest of English hotels cannot compete, in size and guest-accommodation, with the hotels of Washington, Philadelphia, Saratoga, and Chicago. We can at the most only house a battalion of pilgrims; the Yankees will, *tant bien que mal*, litter down a whole division, and, when the hotel proper is full, 'colonise out' the supplementary brigades in lodgings hired *ad hoc*. Less necessity is there that I should strive to draw any minute picture of the peculiarities of American hotel life. What these peculiarities are, all the world, on this side the ocean, knows with tolerable accuracy. Every traveller combining powers of close observation with a facility for sprightly description—from Fanny Kemble to Arthur Sketchley, from Dr. Russell to Mr. Anthony Trollope—has had his or her say about the stoves and the spittoons, the succotash and the soft-shell crabs, the cocktails and juleps, the gongs, the 'lifts,' and the Irish or negro waiters at Willard's, or the National, or the Continental; indeed, a good many tourists seem to have visited the United States with the special purpose of writing about hotel life, and nothing else. Still, for the immediate practical purpose I have in hand, I may summarise the following as the most conspicuous items in the American hotel system:

1. That you pay a certain sum *per diem* for your board and lodging, and that, your laundry and any alcoholic stimulants of which you may choose to partake excepted, there are absolutely no extras.
2. That the servants do not expect to be fee'd; and that if you are stupid enough to fee them, you will not take much by your motion, —save only at Saratoga, where a *douceur* sent down-stairs to the cook will sometimes impel that functionary to favour you with an exceptionally savoury *plat* at dinner. Of this, even, you cannot be always positively certain; for there are usually so many guests in the hotel, that the cook is apt to forget the particular guest who has sent him a dollar as a bonus; or else the waiter makes a mistake, and gives

the exceptionally savoury *plat* to the wrong man. 3. That in the huge hotels there is no *table d'hôte*, as that term is generally understood in Europe: that is to say, a table at which the diners sit down with some state and ceremony, have their seats reserved for them so long as they remain in the hotel, and are offered in succession the different dishes in the bill of fare. The American grand hotel system is to have a large dining-hall, common to all the guests which is open for certain meals at certain times, but at no other. Thus, say that the dinner-hour is from two until five P.M. A guest walks into the common hall, takes the first seat at the first table—there are a great many tables, instead of one long one, as in Europe—he finds vacant, and orders such dishes as may suit his palate. These are brought to him in relays by a waiter. The guest is not expected to order wine or beer, either for his own detriment, or for 'the good of the house;' indeed, the common practice at thorough American hotels is not to drink any fermented beverage at dinner. 'Liquoring-up' is reserved for the subsequent *séance* at the bar; and when he has finished his meal he rises, to smoke, or drink, or chew, or to do as 'he dam pleases,' without saying anything to anybody. 4. That ladies dine in the same room as the gentlemen, but that in every hotel there is a luxurious drawing-room—often there are half a dozen—for the exclusive use of the Aggressive Sex. 5. That it is with the extremest rarity that private rooms are asked for, and that a travelling bachelor who demands a private sitting-room will run a very great risk of being looked upon with suspicion as a possible bank-note forger flying from the officers of justice, and anxious to secure a temporary studio for the pursuit of his vocation. 6. That the landlord thinks himself as good as yourself, and a great deal better.

Reviewing the half-dozen points I have laid down, I am inclined to regard as advantages the non-payment of any fees to waiters; the substitution in very large hotels of common tables, with a common bill of fare for a set *table d'hôte*; and the invariable provision of a ladies' drawing-room. First, as to servants' fees. It is not nearly twenty years since poor Albert Smith, in a pamphlet called *The Great Hotel Question*, drew attention to the gross extortions practised by waiters, boots, and chambermaids on travellers, and to the insolence with which those underlings vented their spite on a guest if their demands were not complied with or their expectations fulfilled. The correspondence columns of the *Times* were filled for many weeks with the expostulations of travellers and the explanations of landlords; and ultimately a compromise was effected, from which all kinds of beneficial results were expected. This compromise turned out very shortly to be as egregious and transparent a piece of humbug as the Irish Land Act has proved, and as the Adulterous Food Act will prove to be. Under the new and improved



guest was to pay a 'lump sum,' varying between a shilling and two shillings a day, for 'attendance,' and nothing farther was to be expected from him. As things stand at present, he is punctually charged a shilling, or eighteenpence, or two shillings a day for 'service;' if his wife is travelling with him, this item in his bill will be doubled; but he will find when he has packed up his luggage, paid his bill, and is ready to depart, that he has still reckoned, not precisely without his host, but without his host's servants. As he leaves his bedroom, he finds the chambermaid waiting on the staircase for a fee; the head-waiters and the under-waiters too in the coffee-room, and the boy in buttons who answers the smoking-room bell, all expect *backshish*; and the boots and porter who help him into his cab at the door confidently touch their caps, in view of the gratuity about to be handed to them. There is no absolute corporal compulsion in the matter; but the moral coercion is more grievous than that of stripes or thumbscrews. You may, it is true, go away without discharging a sou beyond the attendance for which you have been charged. What is it to you if you are held to be the meanest of curmudgeons by the waiter, the chambermaid, the boots, and the porter? You are here to-day, and gone to-morrow. But we will suppose the hotel to have been, in the way of lodging and refection, a very comfortable one. Suppose you are desirous of returning to it, or that in the way of your business you are absolutely obliged in the course of a few weeks to go back to it. *Sed revocare gradum!* I should counsel you to be cautious if you have not fee'd the servants, in addition to the charge for attendance. You will be recognised, and served sulkily, boorishly, or not at all. Even during a first visit, hotel servants seem, like railway porters, to possess some secret art of 'smelling out,' so to speak, the traveller who will 'tip' them.

The scarcity of private rooms in an American hotel is decidedly disadvantageous. A man whose vocation it is to read or write a great many hours in the course of every day can scarcely pursue those labours, either with comfort to himself or with profit to others, in a public bar or even in a public reading-room; and a lady with a large family of children must either take her olive-branches with her into the *salon*, where they annoy the ladies who do not happen to be *mammæ*, or fight with the other children; or she must cabin, crib, and confine them in her bedroom, where their yells of joy or anguish drive the solitary bachelor in the next room mad; or else she must allow them to roam up and down the stairs and corridors at the risk of their tumbling over head and heels, or getting their legs through the balusters without the means of extricating their imprisoned limbs, or in some manner or another falling into trouble. There are not many private rooms at the large Swiss hotel at Geneva the children, 'swarming like loaches in ten

hackney coaches' about the stairs, are an abominable nuisance. In deed, I scarcely know when children are not a nuisance, save in bed or in pictures at the Royal Academy, or when you have any children of your own, when, of course, their squallings are all symphonies by Beethoven, and their fiendish little squabbles and fisticuff bout so many emanations of joy and gladness to those who delight in their persons and society. On the sands at Ramsgate also they may be occasionally tolerable; although, even under those circumstances you are constantly in fear lest they should fall into the sand-holes they dig, and be drowned; but the only place where, it seems to me, they really know how to manage children, is on board the Channel steamers. The Company's rules sternly forbid the appearance of the small folk at the meals of the grown-up passengers; and in stormy weather I fancy the stewardess puts all the young ones in the hold, and battens down the hatches. At all events, during Atlantic voyage the young ones are seldom in the way, and give no trouble.

The *table-d'hôte* question seems, to a certain extent, moot: it is visible in one sense, unadvisable in another. Nothing, to be sure, can be more thoroughly objectionable than the solitary coffee-room dinner of the ordinary English hotel. The bill of fare is generally woefully meagre, and, as a rule, three-fourths of it are practically unavailable for your purpose. You can suggest very little, and the waiter suggests less. Ultimately you are ground down to a miserable choice of one soup, or one fish, or one cutlet, and one joint. The soup is bad: a decoction of Liebig's essence of beef made without the assistance of Baron Liebig, and without much aid on the part of the beef. The 'stock' seems to be made of equal parts of glue, salt, pepper, and bacon-fat. When to this a few shreds of carrots and turnips are added, the stuff is called 'julienne;' thickened with oatmeal and adorned with chunks of cowheel, it becomes 'mock turtle;' with an odd scrap of bone and gristle flung in, it passes muster as 'ox-tail;' and with a hank of boiled thread at the bottom of the tureen, it does duty as 'vermicelli.' In its normal condition of glue, salt, pepper, and fat, it is termed 'gravy.' The fish is generally very fresh, and when plain boiled it is capital. When stewing or frying is attempted, those processes are usually performed in a detestable manner. The cutlets, mainly, are dressed with 'sauce piquante,' the cook's idea of piquancy being to pour a tablespoonful of tomato sauce (very often musty), from the grocer's jar over a couple of badly-cooked scraggy neck-chops. The vegetables are boiled simply in, and appear swimming in, water; and the wetter they are, the harder they seem to be. In not one English hotel out of twenty does the cook know how to fry potatoes, or cook an omelette, or even broil a mushroom properly. The quality of the pastry is, in nine cases out of ten, beneath contempt; a powerful



*cheese* and some indigestible celery conclude this banquet, for which you may be charged from four-and-sixpence to six shillings sterling. A pint of dreadful stuff called 'sherry,' although of what it is really made I have not the slightest notion, will be charged an additional three shillings; and from three shillings upwards will be exacted for a reputed quart of the vilest *vin ordinaire* or the commonest hock imaginable, which, according to the fancy of the proprietor, will be christened St. Emilion or La Rose, Rudersheimer or Liebfraumilch. This is the ordinary fare you get in England, not at the 'Grand,' but in the proprietorial hotels of moderate size. That there are exceptions to the rule, both in town and country, I hasten and I rejoice to admit. I should never wish to dine, *solus*, more luxuriously and less expensively than I have dined at the Old Ship, Brighton; at the Station Hotel, York; at the Marine Hotel, Hastings; at the Mount Ephraim, Tunbridge Wells—and they say the Calverley is as good—and especially at a most admirably appointed house, but one whose size well-nigh entitles it to be called 'Grand,' the Great Western Hotel, Snow-hill, Birmingham. This is, beyond doubt, the best and most comfortable hostelry that I have stopped at in the hardware district. But at a hundred other hotels, to say the very least, I have dined as badly as I have set forth in the preceding menu.

On this lamentable state of things *table d'hôtes* were clearly a very valuable improvement. Their introduction was in the first instance violently opposed by the Podsnap class, principally on the score that the institution was 'un-English' and 'new-fangled;' the truth being that, so far as males were concerned, *table d'hôtes*, under the name of 'ordinaries,' had flourished both in town and country ever since the days of Queen Elizabeth, if not long before. It was thought, however, sixteen or eighteen years ago, that English ladies, although perfectly willing, and indeed eager, to patronise *table d'hôtes* on the Continent, would never consent to sit down to table with a number of strange gentlemen; yet this assumption—which has since been wholly falsified—was hazarded in total ignorance of the curious fact that for full half a century at Scarborough, and for at least twenty years at Harrogate, *table d'hôtes* for both sexes had been in continuous and successful operation, and that the ladies infinitely preferred them to the sulky dignity of solitary dining. One of the first English *table d'hôtes* of the 'grand' type was started at the Pavilion Hotel, Folkestone, and this banquet continues to be one of the best, if not the very best, of well-provided, well-garnished, well-attended, and well-served dinners. In London, the *table d'hôte* at the St. James's Hotel, Piccadilly, when that establishment was under the management of Francatelli, bore away the palm for the excellence of its cuisine and the dexterity of the service. At present the most popular of the grander *table d'hôtes* seems to be that at the Langham.

My own idea of a common repast in my grand hotel of the future (Leicester-square, W.C.), while looking to France as its culinary basis, approximates nearer to the American than to the continental type as regards the manner of its service. A 'grand' *table d'hôte*—that is to say, one where from a hundred to two hundred and fifty guests are solemnly planted at a horseshoe table, to have the contents of so many dishes—the majority of which they have little liking for—passed under their noses, is to my thinking a grand mistake. The dinner seems intolerably long; the meats are mostly in a tepid condition; the tit-bits of favourite *plats* are so eagerly snapped up that your own chance of getting anything succulent is reduced to a *minimum*; and at the conclusion of about an hour and a quarter of hope deferred and heart-sickness, aggravated by the circumstances of your neighbour to the right being deaf, and your neighbour to the left a bore, while the waiters have been either inattentive, sulky, or innocent, you find that you have paid (wine included) about eight or nine shillings for a banquet chiefly consisting of artificial flowers, electro-plate, and ratafia cakes, flavoured by stale bread, a dubious vintage, and some splashes of gravy from the dish which the careless fellow behind you did not know how to hold properly. Sixty guests are, to my mind, the very largest number of diners who can be properly accommodated at a single table; but there is no valid reason why, in a banqueting-hall of sufficient size, six hundred guests should not dine amply, elegantly, and comfortably from a common bill of fare, paying a fixed price for the meal. Tables accommodating from eight to twelve persons each, and to each of which tables a certain quota of waiters is told off, are all that is requisite to carry out the system properly. The hours should be moderately elastic, say in a 'grand' London hotel from two until six or seven in the evening.

I am perfectly well aware that such a system as that which I have sketched has been for some time in operation at more than one London restaurant, notably at the London in Fleet-street, and by Messrs. Spiers and Pond's, at Ludgate-hill railway station; but a restaurant, I may point out, is not an hotel; and some extraordinary aberration seems hitherto to have prevailed in the minds of the managers of hotels, that a traveller should be made to pay much more for taking his meals in the house in which he sleeps, than in an establishment where he does not occupy a bedroom. The consequence of this perverse error in judgment is that every day in London hundreds—I might almost say thousands—of travellers are driven from the hotels in which they sleep and breakfast to the neighbouring restaurants, simply because they find the 'ordinary' hotel coffee-room dinner to be dear and bad, and the 'grand' *table-d'hôte* dinner, unless it is of inordinate dimensions, intolerably cumbrous, tedious, and yet inadequate to the satisfaction of their hunger.



## BOARDING AND DAY SCHOOLS

BY ONE OF THE AUTHORS OF 'SCALA GRÆCA.'

THE prosperity of private tutors is not a bad test of the wealth of their country. For many fathers and most mothers would send their sons, if they could, to those teachers who receive only a few pupils at a high charge. In these gentlemanly little bowers of Academe the swish of the cane is not heard; and this is an especially desired point in our very humane days (that pardon crime and punish poverty). Then, again, it is not unreasonably supposed that the tutor of a few boys devotes more time to each than does the tutor of many; and that, whereas the latter has no time for religious or moral training (though a Scotch schoolmaster walked out of kirk some time ago with his train of boys on hearing this assertion from the pulpit), the former is not prevented from instructing the soul as well as the mind of each of his few pupils.

But except where the pupils are old enough and cultivated enough to be sympathetic with their tutor, the latter's influence is, I fear, comparatively small with most boys. Their ideas are too far remote from his, and they take his excellence as a matter of course; and their notion of his character is confined to any little peculiarities which he may possibly possess of manner, and to the point whether or not he is 'a jolly fellow.' And religion is not what they especially look for as the characteristic of a jolly fellow. The fact is, that his companions and not his tutor are the examples which a boy follows. And hence it usually happens that the *morale* of a private tutor's establishment is either distinctly good or as distinctly bad; for where only a few boys are brought together it is a chance what their characters are. The smaller a community, the harder to correctly conjecture what standard it may have of morals. Large communities (the influences being the same) have but one standard, and large schools, of course, are included in this general statement. Where there are many boys, there are all sorts balancing each other; where there are few, one sort or the other predominates.

Our great public schools possess to my mind only two special commendations. The lesser of these two is the gentlemanly tone of the boys; the greater, the efficiency of the masters. All the teachers these over-praised establishments are picked men; a mastership Eton or Rugby, or even at such newer 'seminaries of sound learn-

ing' as Marlborough or Cheltenham, is a thing coveted, a post much desired by the honour-men of Oxford or Cambridge; because these positions, though onerous enough, remunerate, one way or the other, those who have the good luck to be elected to them, amply. The opportunity of selection having thus been afforded, the masters of the great public schools are usually both able and conscientious men, who do their duty, and do it neither blindly nor rashly, but considerately.

But the masters, at least the undermasters, of the great run of public and private schools are often of a different stamp. To begin with, they are a mixed and somewhat dubious class; clever men who have been idle or dissipated at college; stupid men who have been industrious in vain; men with some greater or less flaw about them; recruited, in brief, from the residue after the *élite* has been skimmed off. Then, in addition to these disadvantages, their salaries are so small, and the tenure of their position is so uncertain, and the prospect it offers so blank, that they do not work with an easy mind, and therefore, not with a will. Their headmasters can get rid of them at pleasure, and are probably mere utilitarians who will do so whenever it suits their purpose, whether the undermaster deserve his dismissal or not. Indeed, it is much to be regretted that the scholastic profession is not, like other professions, organised, so that some little protection may be given to its subalterns against the caprices of their superiors.

If the parent's object be to find the sort of school where the most work is done, commend him (trusting he has no such intention) to the large private schools. Boys are forced at some of these establishments as severely as they were at Doctor Blimber's, for the obvious reason that the success of the headmaster entirely depends on the success of his pupils; whereas the headmaster of a public school, being in receipt of a fixed salary, and, holding his post by a sufficiently secure tenure, is less perturbed by the failure and less eager for the success of his pupils. As a general rule, too, it may be accepted that the poorer the class of boys is that attends a school, the harder they work. The great public schools, in spite of the superior efficiency of the masters, before alluded to, are by no means the most successful in all the kinds of open competition. The cause is the opulence of the parents of many of the pupils. These boys are to school not so much to be made scholars as gentlemen, and the influence diminishes the energy of the rest.

Still, I am of opinion that the parent whose first desire for his son is knowledge, and knowledge so acquired as to be lucrative, should send him to a public school of really high standing. More, indeed, may be taught at a private school; more may be learnt at a public school of a lower grade, where the boys are of a poorer and more industrious sort; the individual attention which is given nowhere



may be given at a private tutor's. But against all these disadvantages the crack public school has this counterbalancing advantage, that it imparts scholarship,—gives a finish which can be guaranteed from no other quarter; because, from causes I have before pointed out, the instruction in other schools is given by men who are not necessarily, in the high sense of the term, scholars, or certain, if they are, to impart their scholarship. And this scholarship—this air of finish—is so desirable a thing, because it is invaluable in all competitions. A boy without it, pitted against a boy with it, in a case where the former really knows more than the latter, is in the position of Roderick Dhu contending with Fitzjames. Roderick was the stronger of the two; but his superiority in rough strength yielded before the finished sword-play of the Knight of Snowdon.

To return from the intellectual to the moral aspect of the question. Those parents whose anxieties are deep upon this latter head may well pause before sending their innocent little sons forth to a place where, if honour is held sacred, holiness is a byword. Strong indeed are the objections that may be raised against all boarding schools, of whatever size, kind, or degree. Wilson says that a certain amount of immorality is to be condoned to boys—and Wilson was a professor of moral philosophy—which, by the way, seems, when its principles are examined, very like immoral philosophy to the ordinary mind. But letting that pass, we may make the allowance Wilson makes, and yet be assured that there is still, at boarding schools, much that is as lamentable as it is unmentionable. Is it not a suggestion worth turning over, that in every large dormitory a trustworthy adult should sleep? I do not envy him; but great evils must be cured even by small ones, and the one must suffer for the many.

As things are, I must profess that, for moral purposes, I prefer day schools. I am aware that there are special objections to these establishments. Necessarily they are situated in towns, and the temptations of towns draw the older boys, whereas the largest boarding school may thrive amid the wolds of Yorkshire; and though, as Thackeray says, temptation is an obsequious servant who has no objection to the country, yet, with regard to the members of its upper forms, the more a large school can be isolated the better. Besides, the *esprit de corps* of a boarding school being much higher than that of a day school, more interest is taken and minds are more absorbed in school sports, which, in a great measure, undoubtedly keep lads out of mischief.

Then, again, that feeling of independence which, with an eye to the future, it is so necessary to cultivate, meets exactly the attention which it requires when a lad of a dozen years or so is thrown upon the small world of a boarding school. But, in a large day school, where the boys are drawn together out of school hours by

amusements organised in connection with the school, this requirement is sufficiently met. Looking at the matter without prejudice, the principle of boarding schools may appear a bold one to adopt.

The reason which justifies a man in cultivating his child's mind by deputy, does not justify him in cultivating its morals by similar means. For not all parents are competent to give intellectual instruction ; but all can give moral. A parent, therefore, incurs responsibility of the gravest kind, by divesting himself of the moral supervision of his children during a number of years, and at a critical period. But boarding schools are an institution in England and we English swallow our institutions. These establishments might be so arranged that the moral contaminations in which they are prolific could be abolished or efficiently checked. But no one at present has set his shoulder to this wheel. Till it is turned all the advantages of boarding schools cannot counterbalance the one moral disadvantage which makes day schools preferable.

R. W. E.



# BELGRAVIA

APRIL 1873

## STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET,' ETC.

### Book the Second.

#### CHAPTER IV.

'The company is "mix'd" (the phrase I quote is  
As much as saying, they're below your notice) ;  
For a "mix'd" company implies that, save  
Yourself and friends, and half a hundred more,  
Whom you may bow to without looking grave,  
The rest are but a vulgar set, the bore  
Of public places, where they basely brave  
The fashionable stare of twenty score  
Of well-bred persons, call'd "*The World*;" but I,  
Although I know them, really don't know why.'

**B**ITTER, with unutterable bitterness, was the disappointment of aunt Chevenix, when at breakfast next morning she was made acquainted with the actual state of affairs. Lord Paulyn had verily proposed, and had been rejected.

'To say that you are mad, Elizabeth, is to say nothing,' exclaimed Mrs. Chevenix, casting herself back in her chair and regarding her niece with a stony gaze, egg-spoon in hand; 'you were *that* when you accepted Mr. Forde. But *this* is a besotted idiocy for which even your previous folly had not prepared me.'

'You surely did not think that I should jilt Mr. Forde?'

'I surely did not think you would refuse Lord Paulyn,' echoed her aunt; 'a girl of your tastes—the very last of young women to marry a person in Mr. Forde's position. Upon my word, Elizabeth, it is too bad, positively cruel, after the pride I have felt in you, the money I have spent upon you even, though I am above alluding to that; your conduct is a death-blow to all my hopes, Elizabeth.' And here Mrs. Chevenix wept real tears, which she wiped despondently from her powdered cheeks.

'Pray don't cry, auntie. I am something like a man in that

respect; I can't bear the sight of tears. I am very sorry for having disappointed you, but it would be hardly a fair thing to Lord Paulyn to marry him while my heart belongs entirely to some one else, to say nothing of Malcolm himself—'

'Malcolm!' exclaimed Mrs. Chevenix with profound disgust. 'To think that I should have a niece—my favourite niece too—capable of marrying a man called Malcolm.'

'I'm sorry you don't like his name, auntie. To my ear it is music.'

'Yes, like the Scotch bagpipes, I suppose,' in accents of withering scorn.

'And now, dearest auntie, let there be no quarrelling between us,' pleaded Elizabeth. 'I daresay it is disappointing to you for me to settle down into a country clergyman's wife, after all my grand talk about marrying well, and riding through the world in my own brougham, over people's bodies, as it were, like the lady in Roman history. I did not know my own heart when I talked like that. I did not think that I should ever be weak enough to love anybody fifty times better than carriages and horses. Please let us be friends,' coaxingly, and kneeling down by the offended matron. 'Lord Paulyn has forgiven me, and he and I are to be excellent friends for the rest of our lives. Perhaps he will give Malcolm a living; I daresay he has three or four handsome benefices among his possessions.'

'Friends indeed!' cried Mrs. Chevenix contemptuously; 'I'm sure I thought last night that it was all settled, and even began to think of your trousseau. I never in my life had such a disappointment.'

Little by little, however, the matron's indignation, or the outward show of that passion, abated, and she permitted her wounded spirits to be soothed by Elizabeth's caresses. Happily for the damsel, the business of life, that business of pleasure which sometimes involves more wear and tear of mind and body than the most serious pursuit of wealth or fame, must needs go on. Once in the whirlpool of Mrs. Cinqmars' set, and there was no escape; all the other engagements were as nothing to that lady's demands upon their time, and Mrs. Chevenix, for some unexplained reason, had entered upon a close alliance with the mistress of the Rancho.

'I did not think Mrs. Cinqmars was at all your style, auntie,' Elizabeth said, wondering that this new-fledged friendship should be so strong upon the wing.

'Mrs. Cinqmars' style may not be faultless, but she is one of the best-natured little women I ever met, and has the art of making her house most delightful,' replied Mrs. Chevenix decisively.

'I think we ought to take our brass bedsteads out to Fulham and camp under the trees, now the warm weather has set in. We almost live there, as it is,' said Elizabeth.

There was some foundation for this remark in the fact that Mrs.



Chevenix and her niece were oftener at the Rancho than anywhere else. Mrs. Cinqmars devoted all the forces of her being to the pursuit of pleasure; and as these gaieties and hospitalities assisted Mr. Cinqmars not a little in the pursuit of gain, the lady was allowed the free exercise of her talents in the art of making people forget that life was meant for anything graver or higher than a perpetual talking of small-talk and quaffing of iced cups in the summer sunshine, now under the striped awning of a barge gliding up the sunlit river, anon in the cool glades of some primeval forest like Windsor or Burnham Beeches. If the destiny of mankind began and ended in picnics, water-parties, kettledrums, and private theatricals, Mrs. Cinqmars would have been among the leaders of the world; but, unfortunately for the lady, those delights are fleeting as the bubbles on the river, and, however wide their circle spreads, make but brief impression, and are forgotten after a season or two. Mr. and Mrs. Cinqmars might have commemorated themselves in a pyramid as high as Pharaoh's, built out of empty champagne bottles; but so ungrateful are the butterfly race they fed, that almost the only record of their hospitality at the end of a season was a backyard full of empty bottles, and the cases, which an odd man chopped up for firewood.

While the season lasted, however, Mrs. Cinqmars drank freely of pleasure's sparkling cup, and found no bitterness even in the lees thereof. She rarely left a blank day in her programme. Every week brought its water-party or its picnic. Every morning found her breakfast-tray—she did not leave her room till the business of the day began—piled high with notes of acceptance or refusal in answer to her coquettish little notes of invitation. She was not a person who sent meaningless cards 'requesting,' but wrote dainty little letters on monogram-embazoned paper, full of familiar nothings, breathing the warmest friendship.

'The season is so short,' she used to say pensively, 'one cannot do too much while the fine weather lasts.'

After that day at Epsom Mrs. Cinqmars made no party to which she did not invite her dearest Miss Luttrell. She was eager for the society of her dearest Mrs. Chevenix at all her dinners and afternoons; but there were picnics and water-parties which might be too fatiguing for that dearest friend, on which occasions she begged to be intrusted with the care of her sweet Miss Luttrell—a privilege the matron was not slow to accord. Dinners and dances in Tyburnia were declined with ruthlessness in favour of Mrs. Cinqmars—ay, even a dinner in Eaton-square, at the abode of a millionaire baronet, in the iron trade.

'Upon my word, auntie, I don't care about going so much to Mrs. Cinqmars,' Elizabeth remonstrated. 'I certainly do enjoy myself more at her parties than anywhere else, but I hardly think Malcolm would like me to spend so much time in that kind of society.'

'You had better send a statement of all your engagements to Mr. Forde, and allow him to direct your movements,' replied Mrs. Chevenix; and mingled feelings, the fear of ridicule, and her own inclination, which drew her strongly towards Henley and Virgin Water, kept Elizabeth silent.

Mr. Forde's remonstrances about the length of her visit had abated of late, for the curate had been summoned to Scotland, to attend the sick-bed of one of his few remaining kindred, his father's only brother, an old man to whom he was warmly attached. His letters came now from the North, and were only brief records of sufferings from which there seemed no hope of other relief than death. He had no time to write at length to his betrothed, and no spirits for letter-writing. 'I don't want to sadden you, dearest,' he wrote 'and therefore make my letters of the briefest, for my mind is full of our patient, and the quiet fortitude with which he endures this protracted trial, too full even for those happy thoughts of the future which have brightened my life of late. But I do look forward to our meeting, Lizzie; whatever sorrow may lie between this hour and that. And I hope to hear speedily of your return to the West.'

'Do you know if this uncle is likely to leave him any money?' Mrs. Chevenix inquired with a languid interest, when she was informed of Mr. Forde's movements. A few hundreds a year could make little difference in that poverty-stricken career which Elizabeth had chosen for herself. It would be but as a grain of sand when weighed against a viscount's coronet, and half-a-dozen estates.

'I believe Malcolm will be richer, auntie. There is a small estate in Scotland that must come to him.'

'A small estate in Scotland, where land lets at ten shillings an acre, I suppose. Or perhaps it is all waste, mere sand and heath. But what does it matter? You have chosen to go through life as a pauper. It is only a question of a crust of bread more or less.'

There was hardly a necessity for Elizabeth to hurry back to Hawleigh, to the untimely cutting off of all these summer delights when Mr. Forde was away. She thought how dreary the place would seem without him. Gertrude, Diana, Blanche, with their stock phrases and their perennial commonplaces, and their insignificant scraps of gossip about the Hawleigh gentility; the dull old high street; the shop-windows she had looked at so often, till she knew every item of the merchandise. She thought of going over all the old ground again with a shudder. 'Life in a convent would be gayer,' she thought; 'the nuns could not *all* be Gertrudes and Dianas.'

So she wrote a dutiful letter to her betrothed, full of sympathy with his sorrow, and informing him that she was beginning to grow a little tired of London, and would go back to the West directly she heard of his return. 'Don't ask me to go any sooner, Malcolm,' she said; 'the place would seem horrible to me without you. I was



your face to be the first to welcome me home. I think sometimes of the days when we shall have our own home, and I shall stand at the gate watching for you.'

The Derby-day was a thing of the remote past, and Henley regatta was over, before Elizabeth received notice of Mr. Forde's return. She had seen Lord Paulyn almost daily during the interval, and his friendship had never wavered. He was still her devoted slave, still patient under her scornful speeches, still eager to gratify her smallest caprice, still a kind of barrier between her and all other worship. Serene in the consciousness of having done her duty, of having, with a fortitude unknown to the common order of womankind, rejected all the advantages of wealth and rank, she saw no peril to herself or her admirer in that frivolous kind of intimacy which she permitted to him. It was an understood thing that she was to be another man's wife—that the end of the season was to be her everlasting farewell to worldly pleasures. Lord Paulyn appeared to accept his position with gentlemanlike resignation. He would even speak of his happier rival sometimes, with but little bitterness, with a good-humoured contempt, as of an inferior order of being. Elizabeth thought he was cured.

Henley regatta and the longest day were over, but the summer was yet in its prime—the nights knew not darkness, only a starry twilight betwixt sundown and sunrise.

'How tired the sun must be by the end of the season,' said Elizabeth, 'keeping such late hours, and always glaring down upon races and regattas and flower-shows and garden-parties!'

'Don't pity him: he's such a lazy beggar, and so fond of skulking behind the clouds on rainy days,' answered Lord Paulyn. 'I wish we could shuffle out of our engagements as easily as he shirks his.'

Mrs. Cinqmars, who was never happy without some grand event in preparation, had hardly given herself time to breathe after her water-party at Henley—a luncheon for five-and-twenty people on board a gilded barge, towed up the river from Maidenhead—when she was up to her eyes in the arrangement of private theatricals for the tenth of July—a festivity which was to mark the close of her hospitalities.

'We start for Hombourg on the twelfth,' she said, with a sigh; 'and as I've been going up like a rocket all the season, I don't want to come down like a stick at the last. So, you see, our theatricals must be a success, Lord Paulyn. It's not to be a common drawing-room business, you know, but a regular affair, for the benefit of the Asylum for the Widows of Indigent Stockbrokers. Tickets a guinea each. A few reserved fauteuils at two guineas.'

'Do you mean to say you're going to let a herd of strangers into your house?' inquired the Viscount with amazement. 'Why, you'll have the swell-mob after your plate!'

'The tickets will be only disposed of by our friends, you obtuse creature,' said Mrs. Cinqmars; 'but it's not half so much fun acting before a lot of people you see every day, as doing it in real earnest for a benevolent purpose. I shall expect you to sell something like fifty-pounds worth of tickets, and to bring all the heavy swells you can scrape together. I want the affair to be really brilliant. But that is not the point we have to discuss to-day. Before we can print our programmes or stir a step in the business, we must definitively settle our pieces, and cast them.'

This speech was uttered in a friendly little gathering beneath the umbrage of perfumed limes, the river flashing in the foreground, a few of Mrs. Cinqmars' dearest friends, of both sexes—the Viscount, Major Bolding, a young man in the War Office, with a tenor voice and light hair parted in the middle, the young lady with raven ringlets, a fair and dumpy young person, whose husband was in America, and Elizabeth Luttrell—seated in friendly conclave round a rustic table, scattered with pens, ink, and paper; for it is quite impossible to achieve an arrangement of this kind without an immense waste of penmanship and letter-paper. There was the usual confusion of tongues, everybody thinking he or she knew more about private theatricals than any one else—Major Bolding, because the fellows in his regiment had once got up something at Aldershot; the dumpy young person, because she had acted charades with her sisters in the nursery when she was 'a mite'; the tenor in the War Office, because his father had known Charles Mathews the elder; the contralto, because she had gone to school with a niece of Mrs. Charles Kean's. Only Elizabeth acknowledged her ignorance. 'I know nothing about plays,' she said, 'except that I do upon them.'

'Whatever play we choose, Lizzie, I mean you to be in it,' said Mrs. Cinqmars, and Elizabeth did not protest against the arrangement. She was enraptured at the thought of acting in a play—living for one brief night the dazzling magical life of that fairy stage world which was so new to her.

About a hundred plays were suggested, briefly discussed, and rejected. Mrs. Cinqmars seemed to know every dramatic work that had been written. Every one, except Elizabeth and Mr. Cinqmars, had his or her one idea, by which he or she stuck resolutely. Lord Paulyn voted for *Box and Cox*, and could not be persuaded to extend his ideas beyond that masterpiece. The tenor proposed *The Oblige Benson*, because he knew some people who had acted it last Christmas down in Hertfordshire; 'and I'm told it went off remarkably well, you know,' he said; 'and people laughed a good deal, except one old gentleman in the front row, who went to sleep and snored.'

'You stupid people!' cried Mrs. Cinqmars; 'don't go on harp-



ing upon one string. Those are mere insignificant farces; and I want a grand piece that will play two hours and a half.'

After this came a string of suggestions, all alike useless.

'I only wish our men were a little better,' said Mrs. Cinqmars, with a despondent survey of her forces. 'There is a piece which I should like above all others; but it wants good acting. There are not too many people in it, and no troublesome scenery. I mean *Masks and Faces*.'

Every one knew *Masks and Faces*, every one admired the play; but the gentlemen were doubtful as to their capacity for the characters.

'I'll play nothing but Box,' said Lord Pauly; 'I think I could do that.'

'I don't mind what I do, as long as it's something to make the people laugh,' said Major Bolding.

'Then you'd better try tragedy,' suggested Mr. Hartley, the tenor.

'They're playing the piece at the Adelphi, Lizzie,' said Mrs. Cinqmars, intent upon her own deliberations, and ignoring trivial interruptions. 'We'll all go to see it this evening. You shall play Peg Woffington. Major Bolding will do pretty well for Vane. O yes, you must do it; I'll coach you. Cinqmars and Mr. Hartley can play Triplet and Colley Cibber; you, Flory—to the dumpy young person—' will make a capital Kitty Clive; and you, Lord Pauly, must be our villain. I can get a couple of newspaper men to play Snarl and Soaper, the two critics. No remonstrances. I know you are all sticks; but we all know what great things can be done by a bundle of sticks. You'll all learn your words perfectly without an hour's delay. Never mind the acting. We'll arrange all that at rehearsal. The words and the dresses are the two great points. You must all look as if you had walked out of a picture by Ward or Frith. You'll call at the Adelphi this afternoon, Major, and engage half-a-dozen stalls for the rest of the week; and mind, I shall expect to see them occupied every night before the curtain goes up.'

After this came a great deal of discussion. Major Bolding declared his incapacity for domestic drama; Lord Pauly insisted that he could soar no higher than Box.

'I don't think I should break down in that business with the mutton-chop and rasher; and if I had plaid trousers with big checks and a red wig, I think I might make them laugh a little,' he said; 'but my attempting a stage villain is too absurd. Why, I should have to scowl, shouldn't I, and cork my eyebrows, and drag one foot behind the other when I walked?'

'Nothing of the kind. It is a light-comedy villain; only a slight modification of your own haw-haw style. You have only to see the piece acted half-a-dozen times or so. You shall have a wig and costume that will almost play the part for you.'

Lord Paulyn groaned aloud. 'Sit in a stiflin' hot theatre six nights runnin' to see the same fellers in the same play!' he remonstrated.

'Only a small sacrifice to dramatic art and the indigent stock-brokers' widows,' said Mrs. Cinquars soothingly.

She was a determined little woman; and once having taken up the business, carried it through with unflagging energy.

The programmes were printed forthwith, on lace-bordered paper of palest rose colour and mauve, perfumed to distraction by the arts of Rimmel.

### Drawing-room Performance

AT THE RANCHO, FULHAM (THE RIVERSIDE VILLA OF  
H. DU C. DE CINQMARS, ESQ.),

FOR THE

BENEFIT OF THE WIDOWS OF INDIGENT STOCKBROKERS

(Members of the House alone eligible).

### MASKS AND FACES.

A Comedy by CHARLES READE and TOM TAYLOR.

Sir Charles Pomander	. . .	Lord PAULYN.
Mr. Vane	. . .	Major BOLDING.
Colley Cibber	. . .	Mr. HARTLEY.
Triplet	. . .	Mr. DU CHATELET DE CINQMARS.
James Quin	. . .	Mr. BEAUMONT.
Snarl	{ Critics . . .	{ Mr. SLASHER.
Soaper		{ Mr. SLATER.
Mrs. Vane	. . .	Mrs. DU CHATELET DE CINQMARS.
Kate Clive	. . .	Mrs. DESBOROUGH.
Peg Woffington	. . .	Miss ELIZABETH LUTTRELL.

Tickets, to be obtained only from the Committee, one guinea.

A limited number of reserved fauteuils at two guineas.

*Performance to commence at nine precisely. Carriages may be ordered for half-past eleven.*

For five consecutive nights did Mrs. Cinquars and her devoted slaves occupy the stalls of the Adelphi, gazing upon and listening to the performance of Mrs. Stirling, Mr. Benjamin Webster, and other accomplished masters of the dramatic art. The blood in the veins of the gallant Major ran cold, as the fast-congealing water-drops of an Alpine stream among the frozen mountain tops, when he watched the movements and listened to the words of Mr. Vane, and considered that he, after his feeble fashion, must needs reflect the image of that skilful actor who sustained the part. But by diligent perusal of the comedy in the solitude of their own apartments, and by force of seeing the play five times running, and being urged to attention and interest by the energetic little stage-manageress who



sat between them, the Major on the one side, and the Viscount on the other, did ultimately arrive at some idea of what they were expected to do; and when the first rehearsal took place at the Rancho, after the completion of these nightly studies, Mrs. Cinqmars pronounced herself very well satisfied with her company. She had beaten up recruits here and there in the mean time, and had filled her programme. The tickets had been selling furiously. Almost every one had heard of the Rancho; and aspiring middle-class people who did not know Mrs. Cinqmars were glad of this opportunity of placing themselves upon a level with people who did. There was no rush of those lofty personages whom Mrs. Cinqmars had spoken of as 'heavy swells.' A good deal of solicitation would have been needed to bring these to share the free-and-easy hospitalities of the riverside villa; but society on the lower ranges parted freely with their guineas for gilt-edged tickets of delicate rose-coloured pasteboard, entitling them to behold the mysteries of that notorious abode. Lord Paulyn, hard pressed by the energetic Flora, did contrive to enlist the sympathies of various horsey noblemen in the cause of the stockbrokers' widows—men who were curious, in their own words, to see 'how big a fool Paulyn would make of himself'—but stately dowagers or patrician beauties he could gather none. Major Bolding, however, beat up the quarters of wealthy merchants and ship-owners, and secured a handsome attendance of diamonds and millinery for the limited number of fauteuils; and although the aspiring soul of Mrs. Cinqmars languished for a more aristocratic assembly, she was tolerably contented with the idea of a gathering which would fill her spacious room, and in outward show would equal the best.

'If one has not what one loves, one must love what one has,' said the little woman, flinging back her flowing raven locks with a sigh of resignation. 'We've sold all the tickets, and that's a grand point, and we shall have at least a hundred pounds for the widows; odious snuffy old creatures, I daresay, and not worth half the trouble we are taking for them. A thousand thanks, Major, for your exertions in Tyburnia, and to you, Lord Paulyn, for your labours at Tattersall's. I really think we shall make a success. Miss Luttrell is a magnificent Woffington.'

'Egad, she'd be magnificent in anything,' said the Viscount rapturously. 'I always think, if there ever was such a person as Helen, she must have been like Elizabeth Luttrell. She's such an out-and-out beauty. Don't you know in Homer, when she came out on the ramparts where the old men were sitting, though I daresay they had been abusing her like old boots before she showed up, the moment they saw her they knocked under, and thought a ten years' war was hardly too much to have paid for the privilege of looking at her. Elizabeth is just that kind of woman. It's no matter how she carries on, a man must adore her.'

'I say ditto to Mr. Burke,' said the Major.

'It's a pity she should marry a country parson, isn't it?' asked Mrs. Cinqmars, who had been made acquainted with Elizabeth's engagement by the damsel herself, in a moment of confidence.

'Fifty to one against that marriage ever coming off,' said the Major; 'a pretty girl always begins with a detrimental, just to get her hand in. I daresay those Gunning sisters in King George's time were engaged to some needy beggars before they came up to London, and took the town by storm. I can't fancy Miss Luttrell settling down to the goody-goody kind of life, with a sanctimonious fellow in a white choker.'

'No, by Jove!' cried Lord Pauly, 'I can fancy anything sooner than that. But she's just the sort of girl to do anything, however preposterous, if she once set her mind upon it.'

This was a fragment of confidential talk in Mrs. Cinqmars' boudoir, which at this period was littered with court swords, three-cornered hats, flowing periwigs, and other such paraphernalia. The important night came at last, in an interval of tropical weather, the thermometer at eighty-six in the shade, all the greensward in the parks burnt to a dismal tawny hue, arid as a simoom-blasted desert. Heavy insupportable weather, at which Anglo-Indians and other travellers in distant climes, from China to Peru, grumbled sorely, declaring that they had encountered nothing so oppressive as this sultry English heat in Bengal, or Japan, or Lima, or Honolulu, as the case might be. A damp, penetrating heat, as of a gigantic hot-house. London and her wide-spreading suburbs wrapped in a dim shroud of summer mist, pale and impalpable as the ghost of some dead-and-gone November fog, and all the denizens of the vast city visibly dissolving, as in a Turkish bath. Threatening weather, with the perpetual menace of a thunderstorm impending in the leaden sky.

'It will be rather too bad if the storm were to come to-night,' said Mrs. Cinqmars, as she leaned against the embrasure of an open window languidly, after the last rehearsal, which had been prolonged to within a couple of hours of the performance. 'But I shouldn't at all wonder if it did. Hark at those horrible little birds twittering, as if they were saying, O yes, it will come soon; it can't keep off much longer; I feel it coming. And how the laurel-leaves shiver!'

'We've sold the tickets,' said the Major philosophically; 'the indigent widows will be none the worse off if it rains bucketfuls all the evening.'

'Do you think that will reconcile me to our play being a failure?' cried the lady indignantly. 'As if those snuffy old things were the first consideration!'

'But you do it for their sakes, you know.'

'For their sakes! Do you suppose I pay Madame Fantini un-



heard-of prices for my dresses for their sakes? I shall die of vexation if we've any empty benches.'

'We'd better send a whip round to the clubs,' said Major Bolding.

'I don't want a herd of men,' exclaimed the aggrieved manageress; 'I want a brilliant-looking audience,—those Manchester and Liverpool women with their emeralds and diamonds. However, we'd better disperse at once, and begin to think of dressing. Two hours is not too much for putting on costumes of that kind. Lizzie, you and I will have some tea and cold chicken in my room, if we can manage to eat—my mouth is as dry as a furnace; and as for you, gentlemen, there will be dinner in half-an-hour in Mr. Cinqmars' study. All the other rooms are confiscated to the interests of the widows.'

'Are the widows to see us act?' inquired Mr. Hartley. 'They ought, I think, in order to appreciate the effort we are making for them at its just value. It would be rather a clever move, by the way, a row of old women in black bonnets. Mrs. Cinqmars could point to them when she speaks her little epilogue: "Behold, kind friends, the recipients of your bounty."'

'It will be quite enough to speak of them. And now, gentlemen, if you really mean to be dressed by nine o'clock, you'd better go to your rooms. Du Châtelet, be sure you come to me at a quarter to nine to go over your scenes for the very last time.'

Du Châtelet groaned. He was the Triplet of the piece, and had sorely toiled in his laudable desire to reproduce the looks and tones of Mr. Webster. He had even sacrificed a handsome black moustache, which he felt to be a costly offering, on the shrine of Art.

It was nine o'clock, and the storm was still impending—still spreading its dark curtain between earth and the stars. But it had not come, and carriage after carriage, the chariots of Tyburnia and Ecclestonia, rolled round the gravel sweep before the broad portico of the Rancho. The *foyer* filled rapidly with a pleasant swirling of silks and satins, a fluttering of plumes, and flashing of jewels, until the half-dozen rows of luxurious seats became a very flower-garden, the brilliant colours of the more costly sex only agreeably toned by the puritan garb of man.

The billiard-room had been fitted up as an auditorium, and by a skilful removal of the vast window which filled one end of the room, and opened on the garden, the apartment had been extended into a temporary shed beyond. This shed, with gently-sloping floor and sunk footlights, was the stage. The frame of the window, wreathed with flowering creepers which seemed to have grown up after the fashion of the famous beanstalk, formed the proscenium.

The brilliant light in the auditorium sank gently to a semi-darkness as the band, hidden in a little off-room, attacked the overture to *Masaniello*. People had had just enough time to look about

them before the lights went down, the women surveying one another in their dresses, the men looking about for people they knew. Mrs. Cinqmars beheld her audience through a hole in the curtain, while Major Bolding had made with his penknife for her convenience, and was satisfied.

'They look very well, don't they?' she asked. 'You'd hardly think they were not the real thing—not hall-marked—only electro-plated.'

Mrs. Chevenix occupied her fauteuil in a cool and somewhat juvenile costume of pale-gray silk and areophane, with pink ribbons and a blonde Marie-Stuart cap surmounted with pink marabouts, pink marabouts edging her fan, pink swansdown on her gloves. Her dress was new and had cost money, but the cost thereof was as nothing compared with the expense of Elizabeth's satin train and polka-dot lace-flounced petticoat, and the flaxen wig which was to make her look like one of the Lely beauties in King William's bedchamber at Hampton Court. Yet all this expenditure had the devoted aunt borne without grumbling, or only an occasional faint and plaintive sigh.

If there was sufficient recompense for this outlay in Elizabeth's triumph, Mrs. Chevenix received such recompense without stint. From the first moment to the last of that performance the girl was triumphant, resplendent with beauty and genius, giving her whole heart and soul to the magic of the stage, living, breathing, thinking as Peg Woffington. The mediocrity of her fellow-actors mattered nothing to her; they spoke the words they had to speak, so that no hitch arose in the stage business, and that was all she needed to sustain the illusion of the scene. There was passion enough and force enough in her own soul to have animated a theatre; there was an electricity as subtle as the electricity in the overcharged atmosphere, a magnetic force that inspired and excited, instead of depressing.

Mrs. Cinqmars revelled in the sentimentalities of Mabel Valmore, rolled her large eyes and flung about her superb hair—she wore no wig to conceal that natural abundance—to her heart's content, and made a graceful little heroine of the whimpering and whining school. But Elizabeth was the very creature one could fancy Margaret Woffington in her prime—the generous, reckless, audacious beauty, proud of her power over the hearts of men, bringing over with life and genius, but with unfathomable depths of tenderness lurking beneath that brilliant surface.

Tyburnia and Ecclestonia, and all the men about town were formed the staple of Mr. and Mrs. Cinqmars' set, applauded with unanimity that for once in a way came from the heart. They knew that this was verily dramatic art, hardly the less finished because it was the fruit of only a fortnight's study. The actress had picked up the technicalities of her part during those studious nights in the theatre, inspiration and a fresh and ardent love of art had done



rest, and the impersonation was as perfect as any amateur performance can possibly be, with all the added charm of freshness and sincerity which can hardly accompany the profound experience of professional training. An actress who had trodden the beaten round of the drama, more or less like a horse in a mill, could surely never fling herself with such passionate feeling into one part as this girl, to whom the magic of the stage was new.

Mr. Cinqmars quavered and sniffed and snivelled in the character of Triplet, with an abject senility which would have been senile in a great-grandfather of ninety, but copied the stage business with some dexterity, and won his share of applause. Lord Pauly and Major Bolding were dressed superbly, and managed to get through their work with credit to themselves and the stage-manageress; and as coffee and Neapolitan ices were lavishly administered between the acts, without any toll being exacted thereupon for the widows, the aristocracy of commerce in the two-guinea fauteuils were inclined to think they had received fair value for their money. As for the herd of young men who blocked the back of the auditorium, where there was little more than standing room, they were simply in ecstasies. The girl's beauty and genius together fired their souls. They protested vehemently that she ought to go on the stage; that she would take the town by storm, and much more to the same effect; forgetting that this flame which burned so brilliantly to-night might be only a meteoric light, and that although a clever young woman, with an ardent nature, may for once in her life fling herself heart and soul into a stage-play, and by a kind of inspiration dispense with the comprehension and experience that can only come from professional training, it is no reason she should be able to repeat her triumph, and to go on repeating it *ad libitum*. Never again in Elizabeth Luttrell's existence was she to live the delicious life of the stage, to lose the sense of her personality in the playwright's creation, to act and think and be glad and sorry with an imaginary creature, the centre of an imaginary world.

Among the crowd of white neckties and swallow-tailed coats at the end of the room, there was one gentleman who stood near the door, with his back against the wall, a tall immovable figure, and who seemed to know nobody. He was taller by half a head than the majority of the men standing in the crowded space behind the last row of seats, and he was able to survey the stage across the carefully-parted hair of the gentleman in front of him. This gentleman had a good deal to say about Elizabeth Luttrell, to which the stranger listened intently, with a somewhat moody countenance.

'Yes,' said this fopling to his friend, in the interval between the second and third act—the stranger had only entered the room towards the close of the second—'yes, it's a great match for her, of course; only a country parson's daughter, without a sixpence, ex-

cept anything she may get from her aunt, Mrs. Chevenix, the widow of a man who was a bishop, or a judge, or something—'

'Is it a settled thing?' asked the other.

'Of course it is. Why, they go everywhere together. I was introduced to her at the Derby; he drove her down in his drag, with Mrs. Cinqmars to play Propriety, on the *obscurum facere per obscurius* principle, I suppose. And you'll find him here continually, dancing attendance upon Miss Luttrell, and spooning to an extent that is humiliating to one's sense of manhood.'

'I didn't think that was in Pauly's line; I thought he went in for race-horses and prize yachts, and that kind of thing.'

'Yes; there's the rub. This is his first appearance in the character of a love-sick swain; and like a patient who takes the measles late in life, he exhibits the disease in its most aggravated form.'

'There's not much in him at the best of times,' said the other, with the air of a man whose own intellectual gifts were of the highest order, and who therefore surveyed mankind from an altitude. 'Do you think she likes him?'

'Do I think she is in full possession of her senses?' answered his friend, laughing; 'and that being so, she would be likely to turn up her nose at such a position as he can give her. There's hardly a richer man than Pauly about town—bar the Marquis of Westminster. The love of money is an hereditary vice in his family, and his ancestors have scraped and hoarded from generation to generation. He is one of the few gentlemen who contrive to make money on the turf. The bookmen hate him like poison. He's a lamb they seldom have the privilege of skinning. There isn't a deeper card out; and I can't say I envy that lovely girl the life she's likely to lead with him, when she's his own property and he gets tired of spooning. But for all that I don't believe there's a girl in London would have refused him.'

Pleasant intelligence this for the tall stranger, whose name was Malcolm Forde.

#### CHAPTER V.

'Et je songeais comme la femme oublie,  
Et je sentais un lambeau de ma vie  
Qui se déchirait lentement.'

MR. FORDE had come up from Scotland on the tenth of July, intending to surprise Elizabeth by his unexpected appearance in Eaton-place. He had fancied her bright look of rapture as she came into the room and saw him, after having been told only that a gentleman from Hawleigh wished to see her—the look she had given him so many times during the brief happy fortnight that followed their betrothal; those happy days in which they had enjoyed for but too short a space the privileges of plighted lovers, had



walked alone together on the dull March afternoons, when the curate's labours allowed him such a blessed interval, and had talked of the future they were to share—a lowly destiny, but with the light of true love shining upon it.

Thus had he thought of his betrothed during the tedious journey from the North, tedious though he travelled express for the greater part of the way. He came fresh from the performance of a mournful duty, for only two days ago he had read the funeral service above the remains of his father's brother, the bachelor uncle who had been almost a second father to him. He had not even written to tell Elizabeth of his uncle's death. It would be easier to tell her when they met. He had made all his plans. He meant to stay in London for a few days, while Elizabeth wound up her visit, and then to take her back to Devonshire with him. And then it would be time to think of their wedding-day. He was richer by some four hundred a year since his uncle's death, and he had lately received the offer of a very fair living in the north of England. Since he had surrendered his old heroic idea of his ministry, and had determined that his lines were to be cast in pleasant places, there was really nothing to hinder the realisation of his wishes.

Only when he was rattling along in a cab between Euston-square and Eaton-place did he bethink himself that Elizabeth would, in all probability, be out. It was nearly nine o'clock, and she went out so much, as her letters informed him. He could hardly hope to be so fortunate as to find her at home. And then he reproached himself for this childish foolishness of his in wishing to surprise her, instead of telegraphing the announcement of his advent, as a sensible man would have done.

'Do love and folly always go hand in hand?' he wondered.

His forebodings of disappointment were fully realised. 'Not at home,' said Mrs. Chevenix's single-handed indoor servant, a man whose pompous bearing might have impressed strangers with the idea that he had an under-butler and a staff of accomplished footmen for his vassals. 'Not expected home till late this evening.'

Mr. Forde had alighted from his cab, and stood in the stuccoed porch, despondent.

'Have you any idea where they're gone?' he asked.

Any idea indeed! Why, the butler was as familiar with his mistress's engagements as that lady herself.

'They are gone to the hamachure theatricals at the Rancho, Mr. Cinkmarsh's place, at Fulham.'

'Amateur theatricals!' repeated Malcolm hopelessly.

'Yes,' replied the butler, who was of a communicative disposition; 'my missus's niece, Miss Luttrell, hacks the principal character; and my missus's maid, as has seen her rehearsalling, and has gone down to dress her this evening, says she do hack wonderful, jest

like the regular thing, only not so low. It's a pity you didn't buy a ticket, sir, as you're a friend of the fambly.'

Private theatricals, and his wife-elect the centre of observation. He was not strait-laced or puritanical in his ideas, but this performance hardly seemed to him in harmony with the part she had elected to play in the drama of life. But she had been minded to taste the cup of pleasure, and she was evidently drinking its strongest waters. She had told him nothing of these amateur theatricals—a curious reticence.

'Buy a ticket,' he repeated, echoing the friendly butler. 'Do you mean that tickets have been sold? It is a public business then?'

'Well, sir, it is and it isn't, as you may say. The performance is for the benefick of a charitable institooshun—the hindignan widows, and Mrs. Cinkmarsh have kindly lent her 'ouse for the occasion, and the tickets have been only sold by the committee, so you see it's public from one pint of view, and private from the other.'

'Where could I get a ticket?' asked the Curate moodily. This public exhibition, this playing at charity, was just the very last thing he could have desired for his future wife, just the very thing he would have forbidden at any cost had he been afforded the opportunity of forbidding it.

'And to keep it hidden from me,' he thought; 'a bad beginning for that perfect trust which was to reign between us.'

'I don't know as you could get one anywhere's to-night, sir,' replied the butler thoughtfully, 'unless I was to get it for you. Missus is on the committee, and I know she had a lot of tickets to sell, and kep 'em up to yesterday in a china basket in the drawing room. If they're there still, I might take the liberty of gettin' one for you; bein' for a charitable purpose, I don't think missus would object to my disposin' of one.'

'Get me one, then, like a good fellow.'

'The tickets are a guinea heach,' said the butler doubtfully, thinking this eager gentleman might ask for credit.

Mr. Forde took a handful of loose money from his pocket.

'Here are thirty shillings,' he said; 'a guinea for the ticket and the balance for your trouble.'

The man was gratified by this donation, for in these degenerate days vails are an uncertain quantity. He produced the tickets speedily, instructed Mr. Forde as to the nearest way to the Rancho, guarded the wheel of the hansom as he got into it, and delivered the Curate's address to the charioteer with as grand an air as if he had been instructing the coachman of an archbishop.

'British Hotel, Cockspur-street,' he said, and thither Mr. Ford was driven by way of Belgrave-square and Birdcage-walk. A not



was on the gilt-edged ticket informed him that full dress was indispensable.

He dined hastily in the deserted coffee-room—a sorry dinner, for he was in that frame of mind in which dining is the most dismal mockery—a mere sacrifice to the conventionalities—dined, and then went to his room and dressed hurriedly, with his thoughts strangely disturbed by this trivial business of the private theatricals.

But it was not trivial—for Elizabeth's reticence had been a tacit deception—it was not trivial, for unless she had been utterly wanting in love's truthful instinct, she must have known that this public exhibition of herself would be of all things the most hateful to him.

He was not a tyrant—he had never meant to tyrannise over this fair young creature who had made him love her, in very spite of his own will. But he had meant to mould her into the shape of his still fairer ideal—the woman whose claim to manly worship was something higher than the splendour of her eyes or the golden glory of her hair—the perfect woman, nobly planned. He had fondly hoped that in Elizabeth there was the material for such a woman—that he had only to play the sculptor in order to develop undreamt-of graces from this peerless block of marble.

There were some letters waiting for him at the British—letters which had been sent on from Lenorgie, where they had arrived after his departure. He had spent the day and night after the funeral with a friend in Edinburgh, where he had business to transact.

Two were mere business epistles; the third was in a hand that was strange to him—rather a singular hand, with straight up and down letters, but of an angular scratchy type, which he felt must be feminine. It bore the postmark of Hawleigh. It was that snake in the grass, an anonymous letter.

'Mr. Forde will be perhaps surprised to learn that Miss Luttrell has given much encouragement to an aristocratic admirer during her stay in London. She has been seen on the front seat of Lord Paulyn's four-in-hand, returning from Epsom races: a circumstance which has occasioned some talk among the straitlaced inhabitants of Hawleigh. This friendly hint is sent by a sincere well-wisher.

'Hawleigh, July 7th.'

'An aristocratic admirer—Lord Paulyn! She has suffered her name to be associated with his so much as to give an excuse for this venomous scrawl! I will not believe it. The venom is self-engendered: some envious woman who hates her for all the gifts that render her so much more charming than other women.'

He crushed the venomous scrawl in his strong hand, and thrust it into the depths of a remote pocket. Yet, however mean the spirit of

the anonymous slanderer, however contemptible the slander, it him not the less, as such venom does sting, in spite of himself.

'I shall see her face to face,' he thought, 'in an hour or shall be able to scold her for her folly, and take her to my her penitence; and be angry with her, and forgive her, and her in the space of a minute; and I shall see the scorn in her eyes when I tell her she has been accused of encouraging my

The drive to the Rancho gave Mr. Forde ample leisure thought; for going over and over the same ground with an agreeable repetition of the same ideas; for the amplifications of those doubts, those little clouds in love's heaven, no bigger than a hand, until they grew wide enough to darken all the horizon. shades of Fulham seemed endless. He stopped the driver than once to ask if he were not going wrong; but the man told No: he knew Bishop's-lane well enough, close against Putney-bush and the locality of the Rancho, as indicated by Mr. Forde's sign was Bishop's-lane.

They drove into the lane at last, a dismal alley between high walls, just wide enough for a couple of carriages to pass each other with imminent peril of grazing the wheels or the horses against the wall. One could hardly have expected to find a suburban park in such a neighbourhood; and in spite of his preoccupation with his own thoughts, Forde looked about him with surprise as the hansom dashed through an open gateway, made a swift circuit of a dark shrubbery of tropical luxuriance, and anon drew up before a long low building lighted like a fairy palace.

He gave his ticket to a functionary who looked like a professional boxkeeper, and was admitted to a spacious chamber filled with an overflowing with a fashionable-looking audience. The play was well than half over—there was only standing-room—and the figure of the group on the brilliantly-lighted stage, the focus of every eye, was the girl he loved—the perfect woman, nobly planned

He was but mortal, so he could not withhold his admiration for her grace and beauty, and was half-inclined to forgive her because she was so lovely and gracious a creature. Then the curtain fell and the men in front of him began to talk of her, and he heard the world thought of Elizabeth Luttrell.

The blow almost stunned him. He heard much more than had been recorded; heard how men talked of his perfect woman; heard Mrs. Chevenix's manoeuvres freely discussed, and Elizabeth's operation in all the matron's schemes spoken of as an established fact. His first and almost irresistible impulse was to know the slanderers down. He felt as unregenerately-minded upon this as if he had come fresh from the mess-table, his brain fired with wit and laughter. But he conquered the inclination, and stood by, and heard from the lips of some half-dozen speakers what



world thought of the woman he loved. It was not that anything specially ill-natured was said; the men hardly knew that their remarks were derogatory to womanly dignity. It was their way of discussing such topics. But for Malcolm Forde it meant the ruin of that new scheme of life which he had made for himself. The airy fabric built by hope and love perished, like an enchanted city that melts into thin air at the breaking of a spell. He did not for a moment suspend his judgment, did not stay his wrath to consider how much or how little justification there might be for this careless talk.

These men spoke of facts—spoke of Elizabeth's engagement to the Viscount as a fact concerning which there could be no doubt. And she had doubtless given them ample justification for this idea. She had been constantly seen in his society. He 'spooning'—odious word!—in a manner that made his passion obvious to the eyes of all men.

Could he take this woman—her purity for ever tarnished by such contact—home to his heart? Was such a woman—who, with her faith plighted to him, could surrender herself to all the follies of the town, and link her name with yonder profligate—was such a woman worthy of the sacrifice he had been prepared to make for her—the sacrifice of the entire scheme of his life; theory and practice alike abandoned for her sake?

'She would have made me a sensuous fool,' he thought; 'content to dawdle through life as her father has done, living at my ease, and making coals and beef and blankets the substitute for earnest labour among my flock. What might she not have made of me if my eyes had not been opened in time? I loved her so weakly.'

He put his passion already in the past tense. He had no thought of the possibility of his forgiving the woman who had deceived him so basely.

'Of course she meant all the time to marry Lord Pauly, if he posed to her. But in the mean while, for the mere amusement of idle hour, she made love to me,' he thought bitterly, remembering that nothing had been farther from his thoughts than proposing Elizabeth when she laid in wait for him that March night, and off his retreat for ever with the fatal magic of her beauty, and tones and looks that went straight to his heart.

He must see her as soon as the play was over, must cast her of his life at once and for ever, must make a swift sudden end every link between them.

'I might write to her,' he thought; 'but perhaps it would be better for us to meet once more face to face. If it is possible for her to justify herself, she shall not be without the opportunity for such justification. But I know that it is impossible.'

When the curtain had fallen for the last time, and Elizabeth

had curtsied her acknowledgments of a shower of bouquets, and the enthusiasm in the parterre was still at its apogee, Mr. Forde departed. Not to-night would he break in upon her new existence. Let her taste all the delights of her triumph. To-morrow would be time enough for the few quiet words that were needed for his eternal severance from the woman he had loved.

## CHAPTER VI.

'Since there's no help, come, let us kiss and part :  
 Nay, I have done ; you get no more of me ;  
 And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,  
 That thus so cleanly I myself can free ;  
 Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,  
 And when we meet at any time again,  
 Be it not seen in either of our brows  
 That we one jot of former love retain.'

ELIZABETH was sitting alone in the shady back drawing-room on the morning after her triumph, carelessly robed in white muslin, pale, exhausted, languid as the lady in Hogarth's 'Marriage à la Mode.' Mrs. Chevenix was recruiting her forces, mental and physical, by prolonged and placid slumbers ; but Elizabeth was not of the order of being who can sleep off the fumes of dissipation so easily. Her brief night had been a perpetual fever ; the voice of adulation still in her ears ; the lights, the faces of the crowd, still before her dazzled eyes ; the passion and feeling of Peg Woffington still racking her heart. 'I wonder actresses don't all die young,' she thought, as she tossed her weary head from side to side, vainly seeking slumber's calm haven.

Now she was lying on the sofa, prostrate, an unread novel in her hand, a cup of tea on a tiny table by her side, a fan and scent-bottle close at hand, for she had taken to her aunt's manner of sustaining life in its feebler moments.

She threw aside her novel presently, and unfurled her fan.

'I wish I were really an actress,' she thought ; 'that would be a life worth living : to hear that thunder of applause every night, to see every eye fixed upon one, a vast audience listening with a breathless air : and to move in a strange world—a world of dreams—and to love, and suffer, and despair, and rejoice, within the compass of a couple of hours. Yes, that is life !'

She smiled to herself as she wondered what her lover would think of such a life.

'I shall tell him all about it now that it is over,' she said to herself. 'If I had told him before, he would have given his veto against the whole business, I daresay. But he can hardly be very angry when I make a full confession of my misdemeanour, especi-



ally as it was for a charity. And I think he will be a little proud of my success, in spite of himself.'

There had been a dance at the Rancho after the general public had dispersed, and Elizabeth had been the star of the evening, the object of everybody's outspoken admiration. All the performers had been praised, of course—Mr. Cinqmars for his lifelike rendering of the doddering Triplet, in which he was declared by some enthusiastic friends to have rivalled Webster and Lemaitre; Mrs. Cinqmars for her pathos and charming appearance as Mabel Vane; Lord Paulyn and the Major for their several merits; but no one attempted to disguise the fact that Elizabeth's had been the crowning triumph. Enthusiastic young men told her that she ought to go on the stage, that she would take the town by storm, and make ten thousand a year, and so on. Lord Paulyn told her—but that was only a repetition of what he had told her before.

'You promised you would never speak of that subject again,' she said.

It was in a waltz, as they were whirling round to the *Soldaten Lieder*.

'I shall speak of it till my dying day,' he said. 'Yes, if it makes you ever so angry. Remember what I told you. I swore an oath the day I saw you first.'

'I will never dance with you again.'

'O, yes, you will. But I tell you what you will never do: you will never marry that parson fellow. It isn't possible that, after having seen what the world is, and your own capacity for shining in it, you could lead such a life as you'd have to lead with him.'

'Ah, that's because you don't know how much I love him,' the girl answered with a radiant look. 'I'd rather be shut up in a convent, like Heloise, and exist upon an occasional letter from him, than have all the pleasures of the world without him.'

'Bosh!' said the Viscount bluntly. 'A week of the convent would make you tell another story. Your fancy for this man is one of your caprices: and heaven knows you are about the most capricious woman in the world. You like him because every one is opposed to your marrying him—because it's about the maddest, most suicidal thing you could do.'

'I'm tired,' said Elizabeth; 'take me to a seat, please.'

And having once released herself from him, she took care that Lord Paulyn should have no farther speech with her that night.

She thought of his impertinences this morning, as she lay on the sofa listlessly fanning herself; thought of his obstinate pursuit of her; and thought—with some touch of pride in her own superiority to sordid considerations—how very few young women in her position would have held out against such a siege.

She was in the midst of a half-stifled yawn when the pompous

butler opened the door in his grand sweeping way, and announced 'Mr. Forde.'

She sprang to her feet, her heart beating violently, her tired eyes brightening with sudden joy, and seemed as if, forgetful of the scarcely departed butler, she would have flung herself into her lover's arms.

Her lover! Alas, was that a lover whose grave eyes met hers with so cold a gaze? She drew back, appalled by that strange look.

'Malcolm!' she cried, 'what is the matter?'

'There is so much the matter, Miss Luttrell, that I have hesitated this morning as to whether I should write you a brief note of farewell, or come here to bid you my last good-bye in person.'

The girl drew herself up with her queenliest air. Trembling with a strange inward shiver, sick at heart, cold as death, she yet faced him resolutely; ready to see the ship that carried all her freight of hope and gladness go down to the bottom of the ocean without one cry of despair.

'It was at least polite to call,' she said loftily. 'May I ask what has caused this abrupt change in your plans?'

'I think it is scarcely needful for you to inquire. But I have no wish to be otherwise than outspoken. I was at your friend's house last night, and saw you.'

'I hope you were not very much shocked by what you saw.'

Not for worlds would she now have apologised for her conduct, or explained that she had intended to tell him all about the amateur performance at the Rancho when it was over.

'I might have forgiven what I saw; though, if you had known my mind in the least, you must have known how unwelcome such an exhibition would be to me.'

'Did I play my part so very badly, then?' With a little offended laugh, womanly vanity asserting itself even in the midst of her anguish. 'Did I make so great a fool of myself?'

He took no notice of the inquiry, but went on, with suppressed passion, standing before her, his broad muscular hand grasping the back of one of Mrs. Chevenix's fragile chairs, which trembled under the pressure.

'I heard your attractions, your opportunities, your future, discussed very freely between the acts of your comedy. I heard of your engagement to Lord Paulyn.'

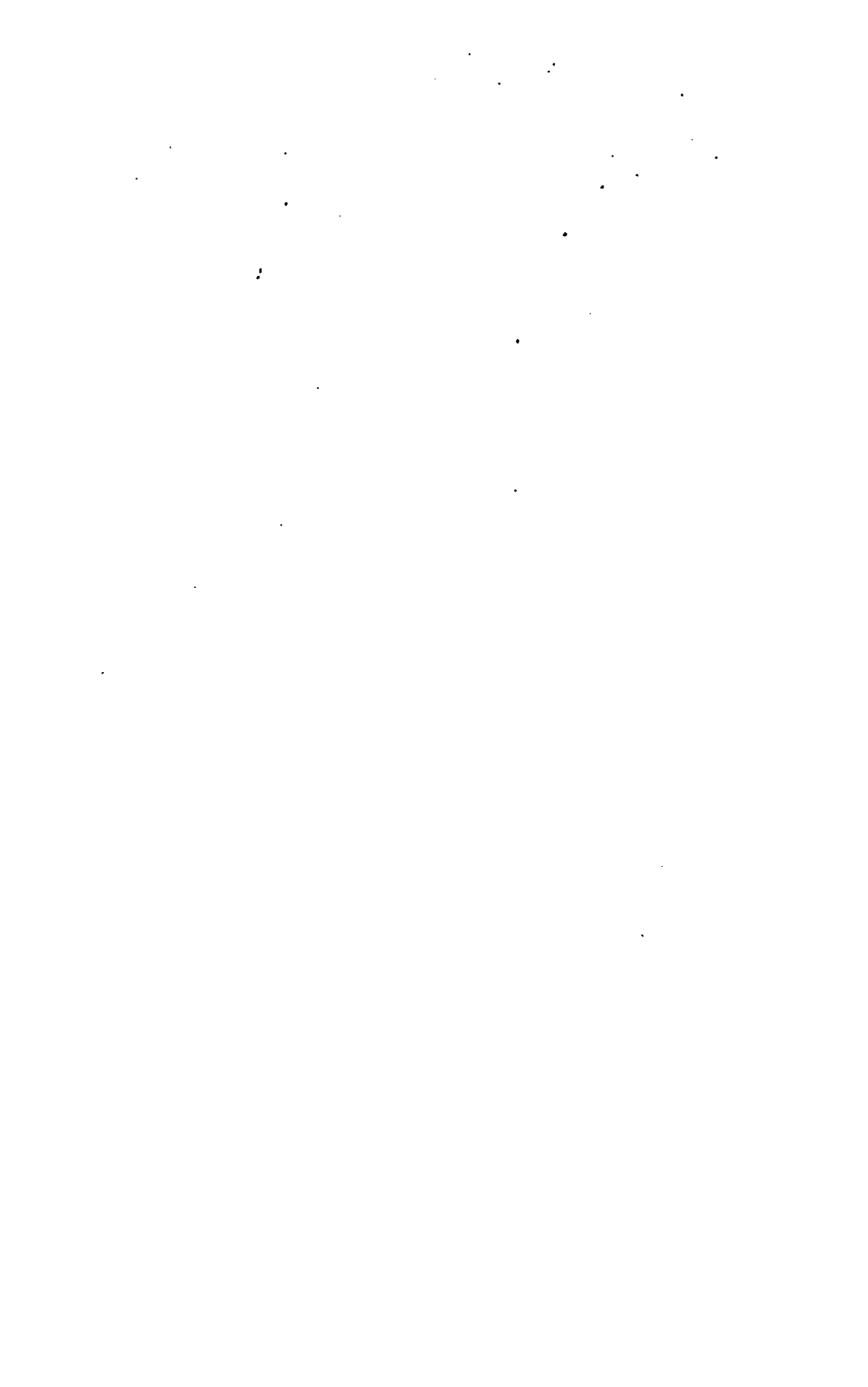
'My engagement to Lord Paulyn!' staring at him with widening eyes.

'Yes; a fact which I found confirmed this morning by one of the newspapers in the coffee-room where I breakfasted.'

He gave her a copy of the *Court Journal*.

'You will see your name there among the announcements of







*H. French, del.*

*J. R. Battershell, sc.*



impending marriages in high life. "A marriage is on the *tapis* between Lord Paulyn and Miss Luttrell, third daughter of the Rev. Wilmot Luttrell, rector of Hawleigh." It was rather hard that you should allow the court newsman to be wiser than I.'

Eager words of denial trembled on her lips, but before they could be spoken, pride silenced her. What! he came to her in this ruthless fashion, came with his course resolved, and resigned her as coolly as if she were a prize not worth contesting.

'You have come here to—to give me up,' she said.

'I have resigned myself to circumstances. But would it not have been as well to be off with the old love before you were on with the new? It is a matter of little consequence, perhaps, to the new love; but it is not quite fair to the old.'

'You have not taken the trouble to think that this paragraph might be a newsmonger's unlicensed gossip, as meaningless as the talk you may have heard last night.'

He looked at her earnestly. No, there was neither penitence nor love in that cold beautiful face, only pride and anger. Was it the same face that had looked at him passionately in the moonlight four months ago? Was this the woman who had almost offered him her love?

'Even if this announcement is somewhat premature, I have learned enough to know that it is only premature, that it must come in due course, unless, indeed, you are more reckless of your reputation than I could have supposed it possible for your father's daughter to be. Your name has been too long associated with Lord Paulyn's to admit of any termination but one to your acquaintance. For your own sake, I recommend you to marry him.'

'I am hardly likely to despise such generous advice. If you had ever loved me,' with a sudden burst of passion, 'you could not talk to me like this.'

'I have loved you well enough to falsify the whole scheme of my life, to sacrifice the dearest wish of my mind—'

'But it was such an unwilling sacrifice,' exclaimed Elizabeth bitterly. 'God forbid that I should profit by it!'

'God only knows how much I have loved you, Elizabeth; for He alone knows the strength of my temptation and the weakness of my soul. But you—you were only playing at love; and the romantic ardour which you assumed, with so fatal a charm, was so factitious a sentiment that it could not weigh for a single hour against your love of pleasure, or stand between your ambition and its object for a single day. Let it pass, with that dead past to which it belongs. The dream was sweet enough while it lasted; but it was only a dream, and it has gone like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors.'

She stood like a statue, hardening her heart against him. What,

when all the world—the world as represented by Lord Paulyn and society at the Rancho—was at her feet, did he cast her off so lightly, without allowing her any fair opportunity of justifying herself? For it was hardly to be supposed that she would kiss the dust beneath his feet, as it were, confessing her sins, and supplicating his pardon.

What had she done? Only enjoyed her life for this one brief summer-time, holding his image in her heart of hearts all the while. Yes, in the very whirlpool of pleasure looking upward at him, as at a star seen from the depths of a storm-darkened sea. And she had refused Park-lane, Cowes, Ashcombe, and two more country-seats for his sake.

Should she tell him of her rejection of Lord Paulyn—tell him that one incontrovertible fact which must reinstate her at once and for ever in his esteem? What, tell him this when he spoke of his love as a thing of the past, a dream that he had dreamed and done with, a snare which he had happily escaped, regaining his liberty of election, his freedom for that grander life in which human love had no part? What, sue again for his love, lay bare her passionate heart, again outstep the boundary line of womanly modesty, remind him how she had been the first to love, almost the first to declare her love? Had he not this moment reminded her, inferentially, of that most humiliating fact?

Thus argued pride, and sealed her lips. Hope spoke still louder: Let him talk as he might, he loved her, and could no more live without her than she could exist, a reasonable creature, without him. Let him leave her; let him renounce her. He would come back again, would be at her feet pleading for forgiveness, himself the acknowledged sinner, his the humiliation.

In that brief happy courtship, in those twilight rambles on the outskirts of Hawleigh, when for one delicious hour in the day they had been all the world to each other, Malcolm had laid his heart bare before her, had confessed all the anguish that his efforts not to adore her had cost him.

‘I have heard of men making as strong a stand against infidelity,’ he said; ‘but I doubt if any man ever before fought so hard a fight against a sinless love.’

‘I must be very horrid,’ the girl answered in her frivolous way, ‘or you would scarcely have taken so much trouble to shut the door of your heart against me.’

‘You are all that is lovely and adorable,’ he said; ‘but I had made up my mind to be an Ignatius Loyola on a small scale, and you came between me and my cherished dreams.’

She remembered these things to-day, as she stood with locked lips and cold scornful eyes, confronting him, resolved that from him alone should come the first attempt at reconciliation.



'Having renounced me,' she said at last, after a pause, in which he had waited, Heaven knows with what passionate eagerness, for any denial or supplication from her, 'in so deliberate and decisive a manner, I conclude you have nothing more to say—except, indeed, to tell me to what address I shall send your letters and presents.'

This home-thrust she fancied must needs bring him to his senses.

'Destroy them all!' he cried savagely. 'They are the foolish  
memorials of a most miserable infatuation.'

\* As you please,' she answered coolly, preserving that outward semblance of an unshaken spirit to the last, acting her part of indifference and disdain far better than he played his. Had she not her experience of last night to help her? This morning's interview was no whit the less a scenic display—an actress's representation of supreme calm, with the strong tide of a woman's passion swelling and beating in her stormy breast all the while.

‘Then there is nothing more,’ he said quietly, but with the quietness of suppressed passion, and with no attempt to conceal his emotion, only trying to carry himself manfully in spite thereof, ‘except for us to say good-bye. Let it be a friendly farewell, Elizabeth, for it is likely to be a long one.’

She looked at him curiously. That was hardly the tone of a man who meant to retrace his steps—to leave her in anger to-day, only to come back to her repentant to-morrow. No, there was no room to doubt his earnestness. He did mean this farewell to be irrevocable—this parting for ever and ever. It was only when he had turned his back upon her—when the door was shut between them—that he would discover how impossible it was for them to live apart.

'There must be some reciprocity in these things,' she thought; 'he could not be so much to me—a part of my very life—and I nothing to him. He must come back to me.'

He held out his hand, and she gave him hers, and suffered it to remain helpless, unresisting, in his strong grasp, while he spoke to her.

'Elizabeth,' he said, 'there are some things very hard to forgive. It is hard for me to forgive you the delusive joys of the last few months—the deep delight I felt that March night when for the first time in my life passionate love had full mastery over my heart, and all the world seemed to begin and end in you. It is bitter to look back upon that hour to-day, and know that I was the veriest slave of a delusion—the blindest fool of a woman's idle fancy. But I did not come here to reproach you. The dream is past. You might have spared me the sharpness of this sudden waking; but even that I will try to forgive you. Good-bye.'

He looked at her and strange smile, the firm lips set in

their old resolute curve, but with an unwonted tenderness in the earnest eyes.

'Good-bye,' he repeated; 'let me kiss you once more at parting, even if I kiss Lord Paulyn's plighted wife.'

He took her in his arms, she coldly submissive, with an almost apathetic air. Was it not time for her to speak, to justify herself, to declare that there was no stranger in all that wide city farther from her heart than Reginald Paulyn? No, answered pride; it would be time enough to enlighten him when he came back to her to-morrow and sued for pardon. She would not defend herself—she would not stoop to be forgiven. Had she not humiliated herself too much already for his sake, when she gave him the love he had never asked?

'This time I will hold my own against him,' she thought; 'I will not be for ever humbling myself in the very dust at his feet. From the beginning I have loved him with too slavish a love.'

He touched her forehead with his lips—the passionless kiss of forgiveness for a great wrong. It was the ruin of his air-built castle of earthly hope for which he pardoned her in that last kiss. Before him, wide and far-reaching as the summer sea that he had looked upon a few days ago from a grassy peak among the Pentlands, stretched a nobler prospect, a grander future than her love could ever have helped him to win, and hopes that were not earth-bound. Surely he was resigning very little in this surrender of the one woman he had loved with a love beyond control. And yet the parting tore his heart-strings as they had never been strained before—not even when he stood by the death-bed of Alice Fraser.

'I am not destined to be fortunate in my loves,' he said bitterly, the memory of that older anguish mingling curiously with his pain to-day; 'let me try to hope that I have a better destiny than mere earthly happiness.'

The qualifying adverb jarred a little upon her ear. He had always set her so low; he had always loved her grudgingly, with a reservation of his better self, giving her only half his heart at best.

'You have been a great deal too good for me,' she said, with exceeding bitterness, 'and you have taken care that I should feel your superiority. It is not given to every woman to be like your first love—simply perfect; and I have some reason to be grateful to those worldly-minded people who are willing to accept me for what I am.'

'Lord Paulyn, for instance,' said Mr. Forde, becoming very worldly-minded in a moment, his eyes lighting up angrily—'Lord Paulyn, who has made his adoration of you a fact notorious to all the world.'

'It is something to have one constant admirer. Lord Paulyn is at least not ashamed of admiring me. He does not fight against



the sentiment, as a weakness unworthy of his manhood. He does not feel himself degraded by his attachment.'

This sounded like a direct avowal of the Viscount's affection, and of her acceptance thereof; surely no woman would speak in this manner except of an accepted lover. If Malcolm Forde had fondly hoped for denial—for a tardy attempt at justification—this unqualified admission was sufficient to enlighten him.

'I did not come here to bandy words, Miss Luttrell,' he said, drawing himself up stiffly; 'but I will not leave you without repeating a warning I gave you once before. If you set any value upon your peace on earth, or your fitness for heaven, since a woman is in some measure the slave of her surroundings, do not marry Lord Paulyn. I am not apt to go in the way of scandal, but I have heard enough of his career to justify me in declaring that union with him would be the quickest road that you could take to life-long misery.'

'Yet you advised me, just now, to marry him. Rather inconsistent, is it not?'

'Anger is always inconsistent. It was passion that spoke then, it is reason that pleads now. Do not let foolish friends persuade you to your ruin, Miss Luttrell. Your beauty may win as good a position as Lord Paulyn can give you from a much better man, if you are patient, and wait a little while for that brilliant establishment which you have no doubt been taught to consider the summit of earthly felicity.'

'Your advice is as insulting as—as every word you have spoken to me this morning,' cried Elizabeth, with a little burst of passion.

'Forgive me,' he said, with extreme gentleness. 'I did wrong to speak bitterly. It is not your fault if you have been schooled by worldly teachers. Believe me, it was of your own welfare, your future on this earth and in the world beyond, I was thinking. O Elizabeth, I know that it is in your power to become a good woman; that it is in your nature to be pure and noble. It is only your surroundings that are false. Let my last memory of you be one of peace and friendship, and let your memory of me be of one who once dearly loved you, and to the last had your happiness at heart.'

His softened tone set her heart beating with a new hope. That phrase, 'once loved you,' froze it again, and held her silent as death. A dull blank shadow crept over her face; she stood looking at the ground, only just able to stand. When she looked up, with a blinding mist before her eyes, he was gone. And dimly perceiving the empty space which he had filled, and feeling in a moment that he had vanished out of her life for ever, the numbness of despair came over her, and she fell senseless across the spot where he had stood.

## MADEMOISELLE DE MONTPENSIER

IN his negotiation of the Treaty of the Pyrenees with Don Louis de Haro, Mazarin estimated it as not the least fortunate circumstance in the position of the Spanish minister that he was free from all interference of the Spanish ladies, who cared for nothing but luxury and vanity. French ladies, he saw, were different. Young or old, maids or matrons, prudes or profligates, those who sought a reputation for wit, and those who found in silliness their strongest weapon, all equally meddled in state affairs; and the most turbulent citizen did not give a French statesman as much trouble as those fastidious busybodies, who, whatever other occupations they might allow themselves, always found leisure to vary them with political intrigues. The princess we are about to speak of was not among those whom he named; but she could hardly have been out of his mind; for no one of her sex in all France, the queen herself not excepted, took a greater interest in politics, or from position, ability, and, we must add, from personal purity of character, was more calculated or better entitled to exercise a predominating influence over affairs of any kind in which she chose to concern herself. Little as she cared for falling-in with the fashion of the day when it did not coincide with her own humour, she has nevertheless facilitated our task by yielding to the taste prevalent in her day for autobiography, in which she displays an amusing frankness, to which at the outset of her book she proclaims her resolution to adhere throughout, while at the end she implies by her consciousness of having fully kept the resolution. She has not, she affirms, written to make people praise her, nor to acquire a reputation for cleverness; her object was rather to divert the ennui which in her middle age circumstances condemned her, by recalling to her own mind the stirring scenes through which she had passed, and giving to the world her own impression of them, which could not fail to differ materially from the views taken and the accounts given by others. It may be, too, that she thought this course calculated to serve her own reputation, and that by relating, as she says elsewhere, 'with truth and sincerity all the good and all the bad that really was in her,' she designed to silence or anticipate other narrators who would have been willing to give a worse colouring to her errors.

The Princesse Anne Marie Louise d'Orléans, Duchesse de Montpensier, but better known as Mademoiselle, and not unfrequently



spoken of as La Grande Mademoiselle, was of the most royal birth in France, being the only legitimate granddaughter of Henry IV., and the wealthiest heiress in Europe, succeeding as she did, even in the lifetime of her father, Gaston Duke of Orleans, to the vast possessions of her mother, the representative of the house of Montpensier. As such, the arrangement of a marriage for her might naturally have been expected to have been among the first objects of solicitude, not only to the relatives who could guide the disposal of her hand, but still more to those who might hope to obtain it; and never has so varied and royal a list of candidates been offered to any lady's acceptance. An emperor, three kings, and kings' brothers and cousins almost without number, had their pretensions to her favour successively discussed; but, chiefly through her own caprice or indifference, all the great matches which were proposed for her came to nothing. Though for a moment she favoured one or two of the suggested connections, she admits frankly that in those instances she was attracted by the position of her intended husband rather than by himself; and the first person who ever awakened her serious liking was no prince of any nation, but only a younger brother of a noble family, that of Lauzun, whom she eventually married. Even apart from her rank and wealth, her personal charms were sufficient to attract suitors enough, if her own description of them may be believed; for she undertakes to describe her appearance with as much minuteness and as much fidelity as her actions. In her description she certainly does not seem greatly to disguise her defects; and, as candour on such a subject is perhaps more trying to female vanity than even a confession of faults of character or errors of conduct, and is certainly at least as rare, our readers may probably not be unwilling to see this portrait of the first lady of the French court in its most gorgeous age, drawn by herself.

'I am tall, neither fat nor thin; of a very fine and graceful figure. My neck is tolerably shapely; my arms and hands are not good; but my skin is fair. My legs are straight; my feet are well-formed; my hair light, of a pretty ash-colour. My face is long, its contour pretty; my nose large and aquiline; my mouth is neither large nor small, but symmetrical, and with a very agreeable expression. My lips are rosy; my teeth not good, but not very bad; my eyes blue, neither large nor small, but bright, soft, and commanding, like my countenance. I have a lofty manner, without being conceited. I am civil and familiar; but in a way rather to gain respect than to allow any one to fail in it. I am very indifferent about my dress, but never untidy; I hate slovenliness. I am always neat, and, whether dressed carefully or carelessly, all I put on is in good taste. I do not mean that I do not look incomparably better when carefully got up; but carelessness is less injurious to me than to others, because, without flattering myself, while I do justice to all I wear,

everything I put on becomes me. I talk a great deal without talking nonsense or using bad expressions, and I never speak of what I do not understand.'

In other passages she gives us a little additional insight into the favourite amusements and tastes of her youth, and also into her disposition. She hated cards; she was very fond of dancing and of hunting; still more of laughing at people, though so far was she from thinking ridicule a mark of ill-nature, that she would rather be laughed at herself than pitied. She liked the company of all brave honest men, especially soldiers; she was fond of conversation on military topics. As for reading, to which she was addicted, in prose she preferred books on serious solid subjects; of poetry she liked all sorts, good, bad, and indifferent. Her disposition, as she paints it, was a pretty equal and not unusual mixture of good qualities with others not altogether commendable. She piqued herself on nothing so much as on the warmth and steadiness of her friendship, which, however, was shown rather in conferring great benefits than in paying petty attentions. She was an admirable keeper of secrets, and was incapable of anything base. She was temperate in eating and drinking, and (though it was certainly not the virtue of that age) she was free from any propensity to gallantry. She was the most grateful person in the world. And if these are especially feminine virtues, she was not without those which commonly are rather the attributes of the sterner sex. She was ambitious, courageous, decided, resolute, and possessed of the most perfect self-command. On the other hand, she was hot-tempered, passionate, and spiteful as an enemy; and so self-willed, owing to the good opinion she had of herself, and her contempt for every one else, that she would rather spend her life in solitude than put the slightest constraint on her humour, even if her fortune depended on it. It will hardly be denied that such frankness of self-portraiture is so unusual as of itself to give a favourable impression of the artist, and the more so, since the chief events of her career, as related by others besides herself, prove it to have been very fairly accurate and impartial.

This high-born, wealthy, showy-looking, clever, capricious, warm-hearted, cool-headed, haughty, affable, imperious, friendly, wayward, mirth-loving damsel was but little more than sixteen, when the whole aspect of the Court in which she moved was changed by the death of that most unamiable of sovereigns, Louis XII., and the transference of authority to the hands of his widow, the gracious and popular Anne of Austria. As if by the touch of an enchanter, gloom and moroseness were in a moment exchanged for sunshine and good-humour, and the Princess enjoyed the transformation as much as any one; giving herself up eagerly to the excitement of pleasures suitable to her age, and by no means impatient to surrender her liberty to a master in the shape of a husband. Even



two years before, one had been proposed to her, the Comte de Soissons; and as, though not eager for marriage in itself, she had rather a liking for him, she would apparently have ended by accepting him if he had not been killed at La Marfée. And now more than one great lady, whose rank entitled her to look for such a connection, pressed kinsmen on her choice, the Queen herself among them, who would gladly have obtained her hand for her brother, the Cardinal Infante, who united with his priestly office the apparently incongruous command of an army in Flanders. But still she preferred dancing and amusing herself to marrying; and the first indication she gave of entertaining any serious thoughts of marriage was when, three or four years later, the Queen of England, who with her two elder sons had sought refuge in Paris, tried to engage her affections for the Prince of Wales, who, as she assured the young lady, was deeply smitten with her. It was then for the first time that Mademoiselle showed a decided preference, not, however, for the suitor for whom Henrietta Maria was canvassing her, but for the Emperor, who had lately lost his wife, and who was already understood to be desirous to replace her. Charles himself cordially entered into his mother's views; showed a lovable solicitude about her appearance; and we have a pleasant picture of the easy unceremonious way of life then practised at the French Court, very different from the ceremonious stateliness of Madrid and Vienna, and from that which before the end of this reign reduced the lively France itself to one wretched level of torpid pomposity, in the description she gives us of her equipment for a ball, when the Queen dressed her hair with her own hands, wreathing among its tresses some of the choicest of her crown jewels, while the Prince of Wales held the candle, and was careful to throw the light where it might best aid his mother's taste, and bring out the beauties of his intended. Her own father, too, strongly recommended the match, pointing out to her the possibility of the reinstatement of the Prince in England, and, what might have seemed a more impressive argument to a young girl, that the Emperor was older than he was himself. But his advice was addressed to deaf ears. She did not exactly

'Let the tear down fa'  
For Jock of Hazeldean,'

since she avowed frankly that she cared more for the imperial throne than for the imperial person; but she avowed her resolution to listen to no other suitor so positively, and showed her disdain for the pretensions of her English cousin so unmistakably, that Henrietta herself saw the uselessness of pressing her farther; and events soon arose in France which for a season put marriages of any kind out of most heads, while the whole land bristled with tumult and insurrection.

If Gondi is the hero of the Fronde, as certainly Mademoiselle

is the heroine. His rank, as the King's uncle, inevitably from to time thrust her father into positions of prominence; but he was a man to whom such rank was a calamity, as serving only to bring into notice his utter deficiency in all royal qualities. With the exception of fluency of speech—a gift far from being always accompanied by, or indicative of, practical ability—he was endowed with no kind of talent; and he was cowardly and treacherous to the degree. His most ordinary resource in moments of perplexity was to walk up and down his room, wringing his hands and whistling when the embarrassment assumed the character of actual danger, to take to his bed and sham illness: and on such occasions, through these disorders, his stronger-minded daughter took his part, considering what became him as the head of a party, rather than as a prince of the blood-royal; and thus taking a part herself was the more singular because, as the King advanced in years, he began to conceive the idea of obtaining him for a husband—while indeed, while he was still in petticoats, she had proclaimed in jest what she professed to mean as jest, but what shrewd observers like Fanny believed to be earnest. Again, what she coveted must have been the throne rather than the King, for he was still only a prince, but already he had imbibed notions of his paramount dignity, his right to universal obedience, which made him look on any opposition to his will as an inexpiable offence; and by countenancing and aiding rebels as she did, she completely defeated her own views. At first indeed she and her father adhered to the Court, and accompanied the King and Queen in their second flight from Paris, for her knowledge of the particulars of which we are chiefly indebted to her own most graphic narrative. Seldom have royal personages been exposed to greater discomfort, or borne it with lighter hearts. At St. Germain's, to which they were bound, was nearly dismantled; lest any suspicion of what was designed should get abroad, it was not deemed prudent to send on any furniture, or even to pack up any personal luggage. The night was dark, and there were not even carriages enough to hold the party without unroyally crowding. But the Queen, thinking she had checkmated the rebellion and the parliament by the move, was in as high spirits all the while as if the rebellion had been over. Mademoiselle enjoyed the fun of the escape and a certain disappointment which, as she fancied, she had caused the Queen by her readiness to accompany her; nor was she discomposed by the want of accommodation found at St. Germain's. Though it was a frosty night in January there was no fire in her room, no glass in her windows, no bed for her, she, with her sister, had to sleep on straw. When she rose in the morning, she could hardly get anything to eat; and she had no change of linen. But, as she says, she was not easily put out, and was quite above trifles.



The Queen's surprise at her promptitude in joining in the flight had been caused by a belief that her father, D'Orléans, was in reality meditating a change of sides and a union with the rebels; but, though it is likely enough that he had already meditated such a step, and plain that he never had any principles of loyalty or honesty to restrain him from it, with characteristic folly he never decided on it till his accession to the cause he espoused could be of no possible service to it. The prospect of it, however, at that time seemed to Mazarin so fraught with danger to himself that he spared no pains to prevent it; and in spite of the queen-mother's known desire for a different connection for her son, sent a messenger to Mademoiselle to implore her intervention. He probably judged rightly in believing that her resolute character had sufficient ascendancy over her father to insure his adoption of any cause which she should insist on; and the bait which he not unreasonably expected to prevail with her was the offer of immediate marriage with the young King, who was on the point of attaining his legal majority, which for French sovereigns was fixed at their thirteenth birthday. The offer found her in a more than usually wilful humour. In reality she had already begun to contemplate the marriage thus tendered to her as the first object of her ambition; yet she received the message with a coldness which was little short of disdain. She and her father must keep the engagements into which they had entered with Condé. The messenger gave her shrewder advice. 'Make yourself queen, and then you can get whatever you like for the prince.' But, says Madame de Motteville, to whom we are indebted for the story, the one thing which Mademoiselle never could do was, say 'yes' at the proper time. Some may think that this want of seasonable decision was the most womanly quality in her character; however, when she had thus said 'no,' or had delayed saying 'yes' in a way equivalent to saying 'no,' she showed extraordinary and manly energy in proving the importance of her coöperation. Condé soon declared himself in open rebellion; and nothing was of greater moment to his success than the adhesion of the great city of Orleans, where her father naturally had more influence than anywhere else. But he, as faithless in his treason as in his loyal moments, could not, when the hour of action came, resolve to do anything at all. There was not an instant to lose; for the King, who was on the Loire with a small army under command of Turenne, had sent to demand admittance into Orleans. If it was refused, it was certain that Turenne would at once besiege the city, and equally certain that there was but little probability of its being able long to hold out against his attacks; while according to the fine-drawn logic of the day, the guilt of resistance would be greatly increased by the actual presence of Louis with the besieging army. Still the citizens of Orleans looked

on themselves almost as much bound, and more inclined, to obey the Duke than the King; and in the perplexity into which the royal summons threw them, they applied to him for directions as to their conduct. He was as incapable of directing as of acting; but in his helplessness he did what was better, or at least more efficacious than either—he took to his bed and whistled, and sent his daughter to Orleans to act on her own judgment. No commission could have been more suited to her present fancy. She wanted excitement; she wanted to punish Mazarin for not marrying her to the King without any conditions; and, though the new fancy was very consistent with this resentment, and though not long before she had avowed such a dislike to Condé as prevented her from feeling any pleasure at his victories, she had changed her mind about him, and just at this moment had adopted an idea that, if his wife were to die, he might suit her for a husband. She had taken up a belief too in astrology, and the Marquis de Viléne, who had a high reputation for skill in that science, had assured her that any enterprise towards which she should take the first steps on a certain day near at hand, which he named, should be crowned with success. With these whims in her head she looked on her father's orders as a sort of appointment as commander-in-chief, or governor of the city. She nominated a staff of female aides-de-camp, and with them quitted Paris without delay. On her way, she fell in with the Dukes of Beaufort and Nemours, who, though also recognised princes of the blood, were also in rebellion. She took them, and some troops which they had with them, under her orders, and showed that she was determined to exercise a real authority by establishing and resolutely maintaining the strictest military discipline from which she would not exempt even the dukes themselves. They and her staff of five ladies gave her the most trouble; they met to play at rebellion, she was thoroughly in earnest; and she would have no *reine fainéante* to suffer her commands to be disputed or neglected. She shamed the dukes into punctuality by marching without them when they failed to present themselves at the proper time. Some of the ladies, who murmured and even swore at the hardships she imposed on them, she reproached as poltroons, and sent them back to Paris. She presided at councils of war; and allowed it to be seen that she would have no objection to preside at a court-martial. When she reached Orleans and found the citizens too much alarmed to admit her, though they offered as a compromise to receive also to admit the King himself, she engaged a crowd of bargemen to break down a passage for her at a spot in the city-walls where an old gate which opened on the river had been blocked up. When the breach had been made, they ferried her across the water, two of them took her up in their arms and carried her over the mud, and then, seating her on a chair, they bore her on their shoulders



triumph into the city, the drums beating, and the people shouting, 'Long live the King and the Princes ; but down with Mazarin !'

She was now as absolutely mistress of the city as Joan of Arc had been. The magistrates formally resigned their authority into her hands ; and she was as ready to govern a town as to command an army. She summoned the municipal officers and principal citizens to the town-hall, and made them a speech ; introduced a sufficient body of troops to garrison the place ; allotted them their duties with military precision ; and in a few hours put the city in such a state of defence, and excited so unanimous an enthusiasm in all classes, that, when the King's army arrived, its commanders could see no probability of attacking it with success. She was uncertain whether to feel disappointed or not at their resolution to retire. On the one hand she would have liked nothing better than to make one more trial of her military skill, by leading her troops into actual battle ; but on the other she had changed her mind about the King himself ; perhaps because she had just before let him slip. She now again was inclined to marry him, and she was not sure that an action might not have deranged her plans ; so she wrote to the Queen that, if a lasting peace were desired, the best way would be to give her Louis for a husband. Anne preferred withdrawing her army, and Mademoiselle sent hers to pursue it ; not being probably sorry to get rid of it, since the chief officers, especially Beaufort and Nemours, were beginning to show jealousy of each other : on one occasion even drawing their swords on one another in her presence, and she did not reconcile them without difficulty. When they were gone, she remained behind in Orleans, where, though half her time was taken up in laughing over her late exploit, dancing and reveling, the other half was spent in making sensible and humane arrangements to repair the injuries which the lower classes had suffered from the interruption of trade caused by the recent danger. It may have been partly from a politic view of not irreparably injuring her prospects of the crown matrimonial that, greatly as funds were needed for these objects, she refused to seize the large sums which were in the hands of the receivers of the King's taxes, though she put her objection on the ground of principle, saying, she had always been accustomed to render to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's. At all events it was greatly to the credit of her fertility of resource and administrative skill that she contrived to dispense with such a supply, which seemed ready to her hand, and the seizure of which none of her advisers scrupled to recommend ; while she enforced obedience to her will with such firmness that, throughout her stay in the city, the King's taxes were collected for him with as great regularity as in any place held by one of his own governors.

Had she continued the same cautious avoidance of violence to-

wards any who bore the King's commission, it is possible that she might at last have gained her end, and have become Queen of France; but her fondness for vigorous action was too uncontrollable to allow her always to listen to the dictates of prudence or even of self-interest. Condé's connection with Spain had so weakened his influence even among the Parisians, that he became violent and desperate, and at last ventured on a pitched battle with the royal army under Turenne, though Louis himself was in the Marshal's camp; and as has been said before, the presence of the King was universally reckoned to make resistance more heinous. In spite of his personal heroism, which he never displayed more brilliantly, it was evident that he must soon be overpowered by Turenne's superior numbers under the direction of superior skill; and, as a last hope, he sent messengers to D'Orléans, who was at the Luxemburg, to implore his aid. The Duke, always a coward both politically and personally, was more terrified and irresolute than ever. He professed to be ill even to go to the walls and see what was going on. And when his daughter begged him in that case for shame's sake to give excuse some appearance of truth by going to bed, he was too frightened even for that, but paced up and down his apartment whilst she more incessantly than ever. It seemed as if he were absolutely incapable of acting at all. All that, by a mixture of entreaties and reproaches, she could extract from him was an order, in his capacity of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, to the municipal authorities to arm the militia, and to allow Condé's baggage admission into the city. The magistrates, who had just received orders of an exactly contrary tenor from the King, hesitated to obey those of his brother in preference. She scolded and threatened till she made them only submit, but agree to place the militia under her own command; and then, thus invested with actual military authority, ordered the gates to be opened to the Prince's baggage; took up her own station on the ramparts of the Bastille, and having ordered guns to be loaded, calmly surveyed the field of battle with her optical glass, and waited for the moment of more decisive action. It was not long coming: at first the Prince had but 5,000 men to Turenne's 12,000, and the result of so unequal a contest had only been delayed; it could not be averted, by his own marvellous energy and desperate valour. His enemies affirmed that he must be a devil, for that man could do all he did on that day; and now the odds were growing too vast for even him to contend against, for Turenne's artillery had reached the field, and was beginning to play with deadly effect on his thinned ranks. He was reduced at last to accept Mademoiselle's offer, which he had before refused, of leave to withdraw his whole army into the city; and, as his men filed in through the gates, she protected their retreat by opening a heavy fire on the royal troops which were pressing upon them. Such conduct savoured more



resolution than of policy. Mazarin, in allusion to her recent proposal to marry the King, remarked that she 'had shot down her husband.' And he spoke truly. Louis looked on her act as one of personal opposition; such he never forgave, and above forty years afterwards St. Simon heard him reproach her with it, pretending indeed then to make light of the act, but still characterising it in such terms that she was put somewhat out of countenance, though on the whole she got out of the scrape as well as could be expected.

Yet in one instance she had subsequently endeavoured to make him amends by a complaisance so little to be expected of a lady in such a position, that it might have been expected to efface the recollection of any offence which had not been productive of actual injury. A strange complaisance it indeed was, nor perhaps does any incident in the whole reign more strongly prove the demoralisation of every class of society than that she should have acted as she did, and that she should sit down quietly to relate the fact without the slightest indication of a consciousness that her conduct was at variance with all propriety of feeling and all common decency. It is the more strange because her own reputation was spotless, and though ambition suggested her early matrimonial projects, she was not, as we shall see, insensible to the worthier emotions of honourable love. Being so, she must soon have seen that she had lost but little happiness by the failure of her designs on her royal cousin Louis XIV. At two-and-twenty he had married a Spanish infanta, who was also his cousin on the other, his mother's, side; a princess of very remarkable beauty; but, though her personal attractions were enhanced by the union of considerable accomplishments, they were unable to retain the affections of her husband, who outran the worst profligacy of his ancestors in the multiplicity and openness of his intrigues, and in the studied insults which, in the indulgence of his vices, he heaped upon his queen. Among the objects of his fancy was a Madame de Montespan, whose husband seems to have been one of the few courtiers who, in their admiration of their monarch, had not wholly lost sight of their own self-respect. He was so far from feeling pride in the infamous notoriety which his wife was acquiring, that he complained of it openly, and ventured to speak of the King's conduct, not only as a gross injury to himself, but as a sin. And the person whom Louis employed to bring him to a sense of the impropriety of his language was his unmarried cousin. Why she undertook such a task, it is not easy to divine. She had no sympathy with the lady's fault; on the contrary, as she tells us more than once, there was 'nothing for which she more thanked God than for having implanted in her an aversion to all that is called gallantry.' Moreover, she was, in her own estimation, a warm friend of the lady herself (for it was among the evil signs of the times that no kind or amount of misconduct was held to disentitle the most profligate to

the friendship of those who, in their own lives, were pure and honourable), and she was a kinswoman of the injured husband; yet she willingly undertook to lecture Monsieur de Montespan into allowing the lady she called her friend to continue a course of life on which she herself looked with aversion. To adopt her own narrative of the interview, 'she gave him a proper dressing; she told him it was gross indecency for him to quote the scriptures and the writings of the fathers when speaking of the King.' But she took nothing by her motion; and could only report to the mistress that 'her husband was a greater fool than ever; that he had talked a heap of nonsense; that he still declared that on the day of judgment it would be against the King that he had deprived him of his wife;' and that he was equally severe on a Madame de Montausier, a lady held in universal respect for having been the go-between in the intrigue, and having lent her apartments for the earlier meetings of the lovers. The failure of her eloquence made Louis furious: he at first issued orders to arrest Monsieur de Montespan, but was eventually contented with banishing him from the court, and confining him to a perpetual residence on his estates in the South, while his wife took up her quarters in the royal palace as a second titular mistress; having subsequently abundant cause to regret the separation from him, when, though her beauty was undiminished,\* she found herself supplanted by a craftier rival, whom she herself had raised up: at last she was ordered to retire from the court, and in her mortification and despair made herself as remarkable in her later days for the austerity and rigour of her penances, as she had been in her youth for her profligacy and arrogance.

We have said that Mademoiselle de Montpensier herself was not insensible to the attractions of honourable love. After the failure of her projects with regard to Louis, he himself offered her his brother, the Duke of Orleans, the very evening of the death of his first duchess, whom Louis himself did not doubt that he had poisoned. Such a husband may be easily supposed not to have been very tempting. At another time he wished her to marry the Duke of York; and finally tried to force a fourth king, Alphonso of Portugal, on her acceptance; but, besides that he was full twenty years younger than herself, and though still only a boy, he had already become universally notorious for the most odious vices. She had recently become attached to a young officer of noble birth, the Marquis of Puyguilhem, so much more known by the title he subsequently acquired of Count de Lauzun, that we shall only speak of him by that name. His appearance in some respect belied his character, for he was small in stature, and of a fairness of complexion which amounted to effeminacy. But France did not contain a prouder, bolder, or more resolute spirit; which more than once led him to

\* 'Belle comme le jour jusqu'au dernier moment de sa vie.' St. Simon, v. 407.



brave Louis himself, conduct which heroes the most intrepid on the field of battle did not dare to imitate. It was, no doubt, partly this fearlessness of temper, set off by an engaging frankness of speech and ready wit, which first attracted the regard of the Princess, who recognised in him a disposition akin to her own; nor, as she had a grand idea of the degree in which high rank was entitled to be marked by splendour and magnificence, was the sumptuous parade in which he delighted, and which at the same time an instinctive good taste always kept within proper bounds, without its effect on her mind. Of the courtship she has left us the most minute details. As no one out of the royal family could venture to raise his eyes to one within that august circle, she was the courter; and it was she herself who, when she had overcome his scruples, or, it would be more proper to say, removed his doubts as to the possibility of carrying out her plans, undertook to procure the consent of the King. She expected to succeed, because, on Lauzun's first introduction to court, Louis had distinguished him by special marks of favour; though afterwards his independence of spirit, which he carried to positive insolence, had provoked the King to throw him for a time into the Bastille. But he had been forgiven; and though, what was almost worse than offending the King, he had made the mistress and Louvois also his enemies, she trusted to a general good-nature which she believed the King to possess, when his passions or his ideas of his own dignity were not enlisted on the other side, and on a certain regard which, in spite of her former acts of rebellion, she conceived him to cherish for herself; and the first result of her request showed that she had grounds for her confidence. She has given us a copy of her letter to the King, and a sketch of the arguments which she used in conversation with him; they took the form of Mr. Pleydell's at high-jinks, Might not a monarch love a maiden of low degree? Might not a princess descend from her tabouret and marry a plain noble? not but what, as she argued, nobles of the family of Caumont, to which Lauzun belonged, had always been reckoned superior to *foreign* princes of any country. And she quoted a long string of instances, among which the marriage of Henry V.'s Catherine with Owen Tudor was not forgotten, to show that the condescension which she desired to show was supported by plenty of precedents.

Louis was greatly perplexed; he feared lest he should be blamed at foreign courts for sacrificing the dignity of his house. At one moment he half yielded; at another he retracted any admissions which he had made. More than once, as it were out of pity for his cousin's anxiety and his own perplexity, he wept, pouring forth tears with a profusion which has seldom been equalled. One lachrymose discussion which took place is more like a scene in Molière's comedies than one in the coldest and most ceremonious of Courts, if indeed the great

dramatist would not have feared to outrage nature and his sympathy by presenting them with such a tableau. She describes the discussion as closing thus: 'I threw myself a second time at his feet; he knelt down to embrace me, and there we stayed three-quarters of an hour pressing our cheeks against each other's without saying a word; he wept on one side, and I shed torrents of tears on the other.' Finally he gave his consent. To raise her intended rank to a rank nearer her own, she conferred on him several of her own estates, the duchy of Montpensier, and Dombes, over which she exercised a kind of sovereignty, being among them; and a marriage might have taken place if Lauzun himself, by the time he was wasted in making the most magnificent preparations for his flight, had not given some of his enemies leisure to work on the King's mind and to induce him to retract his permission. Mademoiselle de Montpensier, in despair; she begged Louis rather to put her to death; but he was now firm or obstinate, though professing the highest regard for Lauzun, and admitting that the Princess could not have a more honest or more faithful adviser; and proposing to save her over the disappointment to the lover himself by making him Duke and Marshal of France. Lauzun declined such consolation, and would not allow his views to bear the appearance of having been dictated by interest; and he not only pressed Mademoiselle to the duchies which she had given him, but tried to reconcile her to the King's decision, and even proposed to go himself as ambassador to England to negotiate a marriage between her and the Duke of York. Of this she would not hear, and, though it is impossible to say when it took place, it seems certain that she resolved on doing what she thought the King's pleasure, and that they were privately married. It is not impossible that it may have been the knowledge of this that in the winter of 1671 caused Lauzun's arrest and confinement in the Bastille. Pignerol, though St. Simon attributes this to the continued intrigues of Louvois and Madame de Montespan. His imprisonment lasted many years, the Princess in vain exerting all her influence to procure his liberation; till at last, Louis, to his eternal dishonour, conceived the idea of making a profit of her distress, and of her most valuable estates on the most unworthy of his subjects, his mate children, the Duc de Maine. But, though separation had weakened their affection, reunion did not. A courtier of the time, in which he had been brought up could not refrain from paying his attentions to more ladies than one; Mademoiselle conceived an unreasonable passion, that she had at all events earned a monopoly. She was jealous, and showed her jealousy; one evening she showed his face before a large company, and he had to pursue her on his knees, clinging to her skirts, the whole length of a gallery before she would obtain a temporary forgiveness. At last the quarrels began



quent that for peace's sake he retired to England, where, some years afterwards, the reign of the Stuart dynasty gave him the opportunity of recovering the favour of his own sovereign, by conducting Mary of Modena and the infant Prince of Wales in safety to France. It did not, however, regain for him the affections of his wife. She refused to see him, and when, a year or two afterwards, she died of a lingering disease, she left all her possessions of which she had not previously disposed, not to him, but to the young Duc d'Orleans. Lauzun, however, asserted his interest in her by putting on the deepest mourning, which, to the great indignation of the King, he continued to wear in some degree the whole remainder of his life, which was protracted to a great age. Besides her elaborate memoirs, she has left us, as has been already mentioned, one portrait of herself in prose, and two in poetry drawn by others, one by the Countess of Suze, the other by M. de Sourdis. Both are, as might be expected, sufficiently complimentary. The gentleman compares her to Juno and Diana; the lady more happily to Minerva.

Avec cet esprit sans égal,  
Cet abord au cœur si fatal,  
Cette fierté pleine de charmes,  
Ce cœur incapable d'effroi,  
Mettons lui ton casque et tes armes,  
Pallas on la prendra pour toi.'

The picture designed by herself is less ambitious; she balances her good qualities and defects with great apparent impartiality, but, as is not unnatural, imputes her disappointments and misfortunes to the blind goddess rather than to herself; concluding finally that 'it is but fair to say that she herself did not sin in conduct so much as fortune failed in judgment; since, if fortune had had sense, she certainly must have treated her better.'

C. D. YONGE.

## SPRING IN SYRIA

BY J. LEWIS FARLEY

No one who has passed the winter in Egypt would think of returning to Europe without, if possible, visiting Syria and Palestine; and, in my opinion, the pleasantest months for doing so are April and May. In autumn, the country is parched by the scorching sun of July, August, and September; but in spring everything, refreshed by the rains of winter, looks green and pleasant. Nature is then seen in her most brilliant aspect, while the temperature corresponds with that of a fine English summer.

A great mistake, however, which most travellers have hitherto made when visiting the Holy Land is in following the old beaten track by first landing at Jaffa; thence, *viâ* Ramleh, to Jerusalem; from Jerusalem, by Nablous and Samaria, to Nazareth; from Nazareth to Tiberias and Damascus; from Damascus to Baalbek; and from Baalbek to Beyrout. This journey occupies about five weeks; but although it has many attractions, and possesses, for the romantically inclined, an indescribable charm, it has, on the other hand, many disadvantages. The wandering life, from day to day, under a pure and cloudless sky—the encampment at night, on the brow of a hill, or in some sheltered valley, beneath the dome-like vault of heaven, with its countless myriads of stars—are replete with pleasurable sensations unknown to the tourist in Europe; but there are many incidental drawbacks, not the least being the fatigue, which every one has not the strength to bear. Tent-life, for those who enjoy physical strength and mental energy, accompanied by a spirit of adventure and enterprise, is certainly very delightful; but not at all suited to ladies or invalids. Another disadvantage is the difficulty of thoroughly examining the country, and becoming perfectly acquainted with the manners, habits, and customs of the people. The dragoman generally agrees that the journey shall be completed within a specified number of days. He is bound to supply tents, food, servants, horses, and everything actually necessary; for this he receives a certain sum per head, as mentioned in the contract, which is signed and sealed at the English Consulate. It is therefore his interest to finish the journey within a stipulated time; and thus many lovely spots out of the beaten track are unobserved, and many opportunities for enjoying the beauties of nature are altogether lost. Moreover, the inconvenience and anxiety, particularly with ladies, attached to carrying a quantity of luggage from place to place



is very great; and the expense, unless where the party is numerous, becomes considerable.

The most economical, and, from my own experience, the pleasantest way of seeing the country, is for the tourist to establish his head-quarters at Beyrout, as excursions can thence be made to the most interesting places in Syria and Palestine at a comparatively trifling cost, and with little or no fatigue. The Hôtel de Belle Vue, on the sea-shore, a little distance from the town, is, in every respect, excellent; the apartments are clean, the food unexceptionable, and the attendance all that could be desired. The air is pure and refreshing; the house commands an uninterrupted view of the Mediterranean; while, on the right, looking from the balcony towards Lebanon, over Beyrout and Saint George's Bay, there is a picture of surpassing loveliness which I have never seen exceeded. The months of April and May can be very agreeably spent by making this hotel one's *pied-à-terre*, and visiting, from time to time, the various places of interest in the neighbourhood.

It has frequently been said that the first view of Constantinople, on rounding Seraglio Point, as the morning breaks in calm beauty over the Anatolian hills, and the sun tips with gold the countless minarets of Stamboul, is one of the most exquisite in the world. Certainly, it is lovely. On one side, the glorious Bosphorus; on the other, the Sea of Marmora; in the far distance, the mountains of Bithynia, and the snow-crowned summit of Mount Olympus; in front, Scutari (the ancient Chrysopolis), with its melancholy-looking cypress-grove; then Kadikeni (the ancient Chalcedon), and, nearer, the beautiful panorama from Seraglio Point—past the Sublime Porte, the mosques of Saint Sophia, of Sultans Achmet, Bajazet, Solyman, and Mahmoud, the handsome tower of the Seraskeriat, the ruined aqueduct—to Eyoub and the dark cypresses of 'the place of a thousand tombs.' Yes, it is a charming scene; and yet the first view of Beyrout and Mount Lebanon left more pleasurable impressions upon my mind than that of either Smyrna or Stamboul.

Beyrout is best seen on approaching it by water. While still at a distance, the peaks of Mount Lebanon are seen in mid-air, surrounded by the bold outline of its undulating ridges. Gradually the outline becomes more and more distinct. Vast ravines are seen between the chasms that divide rock from rock, and huge masses loom forth like sudden creations out of chaos. Specks appear on the mountain side, that presently expand into hamlets and villages; while, on higher points, the towers of numerous monasteries stand aloft in bold relief against the sky. The mountainous surface of the interior slowly spreads out like a diorama, and, as the steamer holds her way, the scene seems to unfold itself as if by enchantment. The houses scattered over the plain gleam in the morning sun from amidst their surrounding foliage, and the breeze from the shore

comes laden with sweets from gardens of citron and of orange. To the left, in the distance, is the snow-capped summit of Jebel-Sun-nin; and, in front, Beyrout itself. The houses, with their slender arches and flat roofs, surmounted with embrasures of stone, or balustrades of wood; the picturesque rocks along the shore; the white-mulberry gardens, and orange and citron groves; the terraces filled with flowers; the palms towering towards the sky; the various and lively colours of the walls; the minarets of the mosques; the grand and noble mountain; the atmosphere serene and bright—all blend into a picture the most beautiful that can be imagined. Indeed, there are few places which can compete with Beyrout in the inducements it offers to the traveller and the invalid. The country, too, all around is historical. There is scarcely a spot on which the foot treads, or over which the eye wanders, that is not rich in the brilliant memories of the past. Cyprus, on the one side, recalls the classic days of old, when the lovely goddess arose out of the sea at Paphos; Tyre, on the other, awakens visions of princely argosies at anchor beneath marble palaces stretching to the water's edge. Farther on is Acre; before the mind's eye the red cross of the Crusader sinks beneath the crescent of Salah-ed-din. Opposite is Carmel, whose 'flowery top perfumes the skies;' and a few hours thence are Nazareth, Mount Tabor, and Gennesareth. Fourteen hours from Beyrout is Damascus the beautiful; Baalbek is but forty miles distant; the Druse and Maronite villages of Mount Lebanon are in the vicinity; a visit to the Cedars forms a pleasant excursion; while the Nahr-el-Kelb (Dog river) and cave of Saint George are only an afternoon's ride. The favourite walk is to the west of the town, along the sea-shore at Râs-el-Beyrout. There, at the cafés, the pedestrian can observe the peculiar costumes of the people—Maronites, Druses, Armenians, Turks, Greeks, and Arabs—as they sip their coffee or inhale the fragrant tobacco of Djebail; some seated at the doors, others reclining on the grass, or on the rocks overlooking the sea; everywhere forming groups the most various and picturesque. Passing the Hôtel de Belle Vue, a path winds along the rocky shore to the extreme point of Ras-el-Beyrout, where the cliff rises two hundred feet above the level of the sea. This walk is pleasantly varied by proceeding over the sands and through winding lanes, bordered by the cactus and numerous flowering shrubs to the Grande Place and the barracks; whence there is a beautiful view overlooking the town, Saint George's Bay, the Nahr-Beyrout and Lebanon. In the afternoon, about two hours before sunset, a refreshing breeze generally springs up from the west, and then either one is on horseback or donkeyback in the Pine Forest—the favourite resort of Beyrout. The climate appears to me to fulfil all necessary requirements for the invalid, as its mildness and beauty attract him constantly into the open air; and when not walking, no



horseback, he can sit on the terrace of his hotel, or on the rocks facing the mountains, lulled into a peaceful and delicious reverie by the low murmur of the tideless sea.

The first excursion that one would naturally desire to make from Beyrout is, of course, that to Jerusalem. The Austrian Lloyd's and French and Russian steamers leave frequently during each week, arriving the following morning at Jaffa, where there is an hotel, the Palestine Hotel, pleasantly situated on the sea. The position of Jaffa is very fine, and the port, the southernmost port in Syria, is the *entrepôt* for Jerusalem, Nablous, Gaza, and the interior of this part of the country. To it is brought the whole surplus produce of the valley of the Jordan for shipment, and, as cultivation is largely on the increase, Jaffa will probably become a very important emporium of trade. A company has been recently formed for the construction of a railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem, which, when completed, will be a great boon to travellers, as, at present, the only wheeled conveyance is a small omnibus that performs the journey, three times a week, in about fourteen hours. It is more preferable, however, to hire horses at Jaffa, as the ride over the flowery plains of Sharon should not be omitted. Ramleh, the first station, is about four hours from Jaffa, and the traveller can there obtain refreshment and rest for the night with the hospitable monks of the Latin convent. From Ramleh excursions can be made to Esdoud, the Ashdod of Samuel, where Dagon fell before the ark; Azotus, where Philip was found after baptising the eunuch; Gath, the town of Goliath; and Ludd, the Lydda of the Acts. Starting in the early morning, en route from Ramleh, you reach the valley of Ajalon in about three hours, and three hours and a half more bring you to Kirjath-Jearim, or 'City of the Woods,' where it is said the ark rested for twenty years. At a little distance is the valley of Elah; at two hours, Emmaus; and then, about twenty miles farther, is seen the Holy City of Jerusalem. There are now two very good hotels in Jerusalem: the 'Damascus Hotel,' near the Holy Sepulchre; and the 'Mediterranean Hotel,' near the English Consulate. Four days will suffice to see the principal objects of interest in the city, and excursions can be made, at leisure, to Bethany, Jericho, the Jordan and Dead Sea, Bethlehem, Solomon's Pools, and Hebron; returning to Beyrout via Jaffa.

The excursion to Damascus will be found very pleasant, as there is now an excellent road between that city and Beyrout. The asking of this fine carriage road, a distance of about seventy miles, has been of the greatest possible benefit, not only to its terminal cities, but to the whole district through which it runs. Viewed as a specimen of civil engineering, the work is highly creditable; the road being carried across the range of the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, by easy gradients, at the respective elevations of 6000 and 4000

feet, and at a cost which makes the working of the road a highly remunerative business to the shareholders. The company have monopoly of all wheeled conveyances over the road for a term of fifty years, and the traveller between Beyrout and Damascus is able to engage a seat in a well-appointed diligence—the time occupied being only fourteen hours—while the merchant can send his goods in the company's covered wagons without entertaining doubt as to their due arrival in good order and condition. Desetri's Hotel at Damascus is, next to Missirie's at Constantine, the most comfortable hotel in the East, and provides every accommodation that can be reasonably desired. Two days, at least, should be devoted to visit the bazaars, khans, baths, mosques, churches, and other sights of this ancient city, which is said to be the oldest in the world.

Most persons visit Nazareth on their way from Jerusalem to Damascus; but I would suggest another route, one altogether out of the beaten track, which is very easy of access. The Austrian Lloyd's steamer leaves Beyrout once a week for Kaiffa, the ancient Sycaminum of the Romans, prettily situated at the foot of Mount Carmel. The passage by the coast is only eight hours; Sidon, the ancient glory of Phœnicia, and Tyre, once the 'Queen of the Waters,' are now only 'a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea,' being both within sight. The Monastery of Elias, picturesque and situated near the summit of Mount Carmel, is considered to be the finest in the Holy Land; the interior arrangements are exceedingly comfortable, and the monks have a world-wide reputation for their intelligence and hospitality. On arriving at Kaiffa, arrangements should be made for the hire of horses, and, after a night's rest at the convent, the traveller will be ready to start for Nazareth. The road from Kaiffa winds for some time through fields and gardens to the village of Belled-esh-Sheikh, which is reached in about an hour. Half-an-hour thence is the village of Yahoor, near the river Kishon, and an hour and a half farther is El-Hartie, about midway between Kaiffa and Nazareth. Leaving Hartie, and passing through a beautiful forest of dwarf oaks, intermingled with trees bearing white blossoms like the orange, you come in sight of the plains of Esdraelon and the mountains of Gilboa, and, in an hour and a half from El-Hartie, reach the spring of Semunieh—the Simonia of Josephus. In another hour and a half—six hours altogether from Kaiffa—you alight at the hospitable convent of Terra Santa, Nazareth. Two days will be well spent in this sacred city. To visit Tiberias, the best way is to leave Nazareth at daybreak, going north-east over the hills to Er-Reineh, a small village half an hour's distance, and thence to Kefr-Kenna, the Cana of Galilee, then passing the Mount of Beatitudes, and the village of Meshad, situated on a high hill to the left, and so by Lûbieh



Gennesareth; returning the same afternoon in time to reach the summit of Mount Tabor, and behold the magnificent view and glorious sunset. When I visited Mount Tabor, a solitary hermit had his home on the very summit. He previously lived in the Crimea; but having dreamt that he should pass the remainder of his life in prayer and meditation upon a mountain in Palestine, he made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and wandered till he came in sight of Mount Tabor, which corresponded exactly in appearance with the mountain he had seen in his dream. After some time, he discovered the ruins of the Church of the Transfiguration, that had been destroyed in A.D. 1263 by Sultan Bibars, and excavated until he reached several chambers, some of which he roofed in and occupied. From Mount Tabor to Nazareth is a ride of about an hour and a half. The return journey from Nazareth to Kaiffa lies by the village of Seffûrieh—the Sepphoris of Josephus and Dioscorus of the Romans—through the wonderfully beautiful plain of Zabulon, and over the hills of Shefâ-Omar to the village of Abilin; thence to St. Jean d'Acre, a distance altogether of seven hours. After a night's rest, and an inspection of the fortifications of this celebrated town, a ride of eight miles brings you once more to Mount Carmel. The Austrian Lloyd's steamer leaves Kaiffa every Friday for Beyrout.

Frequent excursions can be made from Beyrout to Mount Lebanon. The celebrated palace of Bteddîn, built by the Emir Bechir, is only six-hours' and the villages of Beit-Miry and Brûmanah two-hours' distance from Beyrout. The Nahr-el-Kelb—Dog river—is two hours by land and an hour and a half by water. The route to Baalbek lies, for some way, along the new Damascus road, and the famed 'City of the Sun' can now be reached with little difficulty. Zahleh, Zibdâny, Djezzin, and Deir-el-Kamr, in the southern or 'mixed districts,' inhabited by Druses and Maronites, are also well worth a visit. The scenery of the Kesrawân, or northern portion of the Lebanon, inhabited exclusively by Maronites, is, however, not at all inferior to that of the Druse districts, and the hospitality offered in the numerous monasteries to be met with in this part of the mountain renders travelling there more easy and agreeable. A delightful excursion can be made to Ghazir, Harîsa, and Antoura, in the Kesrawân, to which four days may be devoted. The route to Ghazir passes the spot where, it is said, Saint George slew the dragon. A little farther on, the old Roman bridge over the Nahr-el-Beyrout is passed; then the Nahr-el-Kelb is forded, and, in forty minutes from the latter river, Junêh, the favourite resort of the Beyrutines during the bathing season, is reached. There is no actual road from Junêh to Ghazir, but the difficulties of the journey are amply repaid by the magnificent scenery met with in ascending the mountain. Two-hours' ride from Junêh brings you to the fine monastery

of Beit-Cash-Bow, near Ghazir, where a cordial welcome will be given by the Armenian Fathers. The next day's journey will be from Ghazir—five-hours' ride—to the monastery of Harisa, where an excellent dinner, capital wines, and a comfortable bed can be obtained. The following day, equal hospitality will be found at the Lazarist College of Antoura; and on the fourth day, four or five hours' ride—visiting the Convent of Deir Beshara, and passing through the village of Zook, where the superb gold and silver brocades sold in the bazaars are manufactured—brings you once more to your hotel on Râs-el-Beyroun.

It would take months to travel over the Lebanon, to stop at all its beautiful sites, and visit all its romantic villages. It is everywhere mountainous, it is true; but some variety or some new feature is always presenting itself. I know of nothing more curative in its effect, or more likely to benefit the health of an invalid, than a residence at Beyroun, and occasional rides over those beautiful hills. The climate and scenery have all the elements for restoring the derangements of our bodily functions. Skies ever sunny and serene, an atmosphere pure, translucent, and exhilarating; the entire aspect of nature combining the elements of the grand and beautiful; the impressions produced by mountains towering to the skies, and landscapes replete with gentle loveliness: all impress, with their varied and cheering characteristics, the minds of those who are within their influence. The traveller over those mountains feels a buoyancy that seems, as it were, to lift him from the earth; and turn which way he will, there are objects admirably adapted to soothe and charm the senses, to excite and ravish the imagination. No wonder therefore that he should be free alike from indigestion and low spirits, from lassitude and *ennui*; that the joyous brightness and beauty without should light up a cheerful serenity within; that his mind should be in the healthiest and happiest state for receiving the gayest and most pleasing impressions; and that these should fix themselves in his memory, and be ever after recurred to with delight.

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## THE KING'S BULL

BY SIR HENRY POTTINGER

### CHAPTER I. PEPITA'S LOVER.

I AM about to relate a story of one Mendez Pinto, not the notorious liar, but the boldest bullfighter that ever entered the Spanish arena; and if it be asked, Is the story true, and how did you learn it? I reply that it is true, and that it was told at supper after a bullfight in the Seville ring, and in the presence of the descendant of the man whose exploit it commemorates.

In all Andalusia there was no prettier girl than Pepita, the daughter of Gomez, ex-bullfighter and seller of fried fish at Puerto Santa Maria. When dressed for the bullfight in her smartest Maja costume, she was a sight worth a long journey to see; with her slender ankles, arched insteps, and shapely legs, her tall undulating figure, her glorious dark eyes, and wealth of raven hair.

And Pepita was very partial to the Plaza; this taste, it is true, she shared in common with many thousand fair Spaniards, into whose heads the idea of there being any cruelty in the sport had never intruded itself, and who would probably have stared with amazement had such a notion been suggested to them; but the ring at P. Santa Maria had especial attractions for Pepita, inasmuch as she could there feast her eyes on the valiant deeds of Mendez Pinto, prince of picadors and her own betrothed lover. Time had been when the Pintos were a family of no small importance and prosperity, and had not two of their number shared in the toils and triumphs of Columbus? But the days of their high estate had departed, and their descendant, the hero of this tale, found himself, in the reign of Ferdinand VII., 'pious, fortunate, and restored,' enrolled in the second rank of bullfighters.

I say the second rank, because the social status of the picador was confessedly never equal to that of the matador; but so great was the strength and daring of Mendez, and so comprehensive his knowledge and skill in every branch of tauromachia, that not the most conceited of the swordsmen could feel his dignity compromised by the company of the great master of the lance. Popular opinion, if thoroughly canvassed, would probably have conceded to Pinto the proud title of the first bullfighter in Spain, and this at the date of our story, 182-, was no empty compliment, for a monarch more devoted to the fiesta de toros than Ferdinand VII. never filled the Spanish throne.

Ferdinand looked upon a good bullfighter as the noblest v of God, and next to him a good bull; it may indeed be doubt he did not consider the dumb animal the superior of the two. pretty woman and a genuine havannah possibly divided the t place in his esteem.

During his reign there was instituted a not unsuccessful att to restore something of the ancient glory of the Plaza, and establishment of a tauromachian college, of which the King him was head and all the nobility members, raised the dignity of ring to an unprecedented pitch.

Except in the case of the bull, which was doomed to a suc sion of tortures and a death identical with those inflicted at present day, the sport was conducted in a somewhat less bloodthi manner. Instead of the miserable worn-out hacks, fit only for knacker's yard, which disgrace the modern arena, strong, act and often valuable horses were supplied to the picadors; and roar of applause which now greets the bull as he rips some wret animal from shoulder to flank, was then bestowed on the rider wh strength and dexterity fended off the charge, and saved his steed fr the murderous horns. He, indeed, who was able to carry his ho unscathed through the dangers of a whole fight was entitled retain it as his own property. In this manner had Pinto gai possession of a very powerful and well-bred gray mare, which, becoming the acknowledged 'querido' of Pepita, he had presen to her father, old Gomez; and after the fair girl herself, there nothing the ex-bullfighter regarded with so much pride and affecti and tended so carefully, as La Perla.

Next to his bullfighters and bulls, his pretty women and 'purones,' ranked in Ferdinand's estimation his regiment of guar and never did royal favour inflict upon society a more swagger and obnoxious set of bullies and swash-bucklers. It happened t at the date of our story a detachment of these favourites was temporary quarters at P. Santa Maria. Now the claim of Pinto the pretty Pepita had been readily allowed by the indigenous yo of that place, and there was not one amongst them who would h cared to cross the great picador in his loves: and this not only f a wholesome dread of his physical prowess; for with the nat gallantry of the Spanish nation, it was agreed on all hands that bravest, strongest, and handsomest man was properly matched v the fairest girl. But, as might be expected, the gentlemen of Majesty's guards recognised no such provincial scruples or se ments, and in an unlucky hour two of them cast an evil eye Pepita.

One morning Gomez sent out his daughter with a message t neighbour, and it was but natural that on passing the café wh Mendez usually frequented she should peep in to see if her lo



was there. There were but half-a-dozen people in the room, and Pinto was not among them. Pepita therefore would have retired as quietly as she entered, had not the way been barred by the extended arms of two of the royal guard, who had followed her unperceived.

'Pray let me pass, señores,' said Pepita.

'Not until you have paid toll, my pretty one,' answered the bigger and more audacious of the two. 'No, hija di mi alma, I must first see if those red lips of yours taste as sweet as they look.'

'And, por Dios, I too,' added his companion.

And in spite of her resistance the two ruffians closed with the poor girl, and the first speaker, throwing his arm round her waist, pressed his lips to her cheek. But Pepita's was the last cheek those lips were destined to touch; for as the other guests, attracted by the scuffle, rose like gallant Spaniards to her assistance, the door was thrown violently open, the guardsmen were sent reeling back, and before them stood Mendez Pinto, his swarthy cheeks white with fury, and his dark eyes glowing like live coals.

With an instinctive feeling of imminent peril the hands of the soldiers clutched at their side-arms, but before the steel could leave the scabbard Pinto sprang upon them with the bound and roar of a savage tiger; extending his mighty arms, he seized each man by his outer ear, and with the rapidity of thought and the force of some deadly engine dashed their heads together in the midst; there was a dull crashing thud horrible to hear, and then the two men, released from his iron grasp, fell prone upon the floor of the café, the blood streaming from mouth and ear and eye.

The spectators stood aghast and tongue-tied with horror, as Pinto, passing his arm round the half-fainting Pepita, led her out of the café, and back to her father's house.

Very grave and anxious was the face of Gomez as he listened to Pinto's short account of what had occurred. He went out at once to the café, and presently returned with the intelligence that one of the guards was dead and the other dying; both their skulls were fractured by that fearful blow.

'It will cost your life, lad,' he said to Mendez. 'No excuse, no plea of provocation, will the King allow where his guards are concerned.'

At this poor Pepita sank sobbing bitterly to the floor, and Mendez, now gentle and tender as he had lately been fierce and unsparing, occupied himself with consoling her with loving words and caresses.

But Gomez broke in upon the lovers.

'Now listen, Mendez Pinto,' said he; 'by your love for that girl, listen. There is but one chance for you, if you would win the King's pardon. Something you must do; something that has never

been done in Spain before, and that no other man but yourself *can* do.—Pepita girl, rouse yourself, if you would help to save him. Run to the stable, and give La Perla a full flask of Val-de-Penas, and the broth of the stew that is on the fire, and then see her carefully saddled and brought round to the back door: in ten minutes the guard will be here to arrest him.—Mendez lad,' he went on, 'you must start for Madrid at once. This is Thursday. On Sunday the King holds a corrida real; at that fight you *must* be. You must get the promise of pardon before the real offence is known. In any case, you can but die; and better to die as a picador should, with the eyes of all Madrid upon you, than as a felon under the hands of the executioner.'

Not long afterwards, Mendez had taken a tender farewell of Pepita, who, under the sense of her lover's terrible danger, overcame her own womanly weakness. Tearless and self-possessed, although pale as death, she fulfilled every injunction of her father. At the last moment she took from her attire a red-silk scarf, and gave it to Mendez.

'Whatever happens, *mi querido*,' she murmured, 'wear this for me.'

'In life and death,' he answered. Their lips met in one long lingering kiss; and then, at a sign from Gomez, Pepita went quietly back into the house, and Mendez, mounted on La Perla, sat at the back gate, listening to the old man's last instructions.

'You will have time enough to think it over between this and Madrid,' said Gomez, with a kind of grim humour. 'Remember, wherever you halt, the Val-de-Penas and the broth from the *guisado*. With that La Perla will go for a man's lifetime. Let her have the same an hour before you fight. And now, my son, God speed you. You must go, for I hear the hum of the crowd coming up the street on the other side. But Pepita has barred the door, and I am taking my siesta in the back room; and it will be hard if I hear the summons of the guard before you are far on your way. Farewell.'

With a wave of the hand, a touch of the spur, and a shake of the rein, Pinto dashed up the street, half asleep in the quiet noon-day, and began that long wearisome journey to Madrid.

Always slow and deliberate, like a true Spaniard, never in all his life did Gomez more slowly and deliberately prepare and roll his cigarillo than now, as he stood listening to the receding beat of La Perla's hoofs. There was a half-triumphant smile on his shrivelled face as he turned back into the yard. 'Man and horse,' he muttered, 'there is nothing in all Andalusia can touch them. But God and the holy Virgin help them now, for they need it.'

The cigarillo was consumed to the last puff before the old man, with well-feigned surprise and the sullen air of a Southerner aroused from his midday nap, responded to the summons of the alguacils.



An angry murmuring crowd surrounded the officers; for the blood of P. Santa Maria had long boiled against the insolent demeanour of the guards, and now that the local hero was threatened with arrest and imprisonment, popular excitement was at its height, and the sharp click of the opening navaja began to be heard amid the confused hum of voices. But as the officials and the soldiers who accompanied them passed in to examine the premises, Gomez faced the crowd, and with an expressive glance and a rapid motion of the fingers, easily intelligible to a people with whom every gesture has its meaning, made known the safety of Pinto. There was a murmur of satisfaction, and then the inevitable, 'Pues, señores, echemos un cigarito.' Out came the little books, the pouches, and the flint and steel; and when the officers returned from their useless search, the crowd, collected in peaceful groups, was engaged to a man in the solemn enjoyment of tobacco.

## CHAPTER II.

## 'THE BEST MAN AND THE BEST BULL.'

DESPITE its many associations, it is a weary journey, that between Seville and Madrid, as I myself can testify, who performed it in the banquette of the diligencia. Ah me! we were young then, but the misery of that time comes back to me vividly—the glaring heat, the stifling clouds of dust, the incessant, 'Anda, anda!' of the driver, the jangling of the bells, the jolting of the unstable box in which we were confined, and, above all, the reek and steam from the long team of mules. I remember how the anatomy of my dearest friends developed angles of superhuman size and excruciating acuteness; how they noticed the same phenomena in myself, and how savage we became in consequence. I remember, too, that in calmer moments we speculated with awe, not unmixed with envy, on the physical conformation of the boy who rode the leader, and who, sleepless and untiring, kept the saddle (and such a saddle!) from first to last.

On, still on, through the heat of the day and the silence of the night, halting only as long as was absolutely necessary, did Mendez urge the gallant gray towards Madrid. On, still on! Across the wide grassy plains beside the Guadalquivir, dotted with herds of bulls, which raised their heads with a sullen bellow as the solitary horseman went by; skirting the fair walls of stately Seville, and the red Moorish towers of Alcala de Guadaira; past the palms of Moncloa and the olive-groves of Ecija; by the domes and convents of Cordova and the cornfields of Andujar. On through the gloomy gorges of the Sierra Morena, the tawny monotony of La Mancha, and the vineyards of Val-de-Penas; startling the wild-fowl in the marshes of Guadiana, and waking the echoes of the rocky Oceanian

hills ; speeding past the cool gardens and gushing fountains of royal Aranhuez and the wastes of Valdemoro, until the first rays of the Sunday's sun were glinted back from the spires of Madrid, and the wondrous ride was accomplished.

The streets were nearly empty at the early hour when Mendez passed through the gate. He rode to a small quiet inn, kept by a brother of Gomez. Great was the astonishment of the proprietor when he saw who had roused him from his morning slumbers, but Pinto cut short his inquisitiveness abruptly.

'Ask no questions, my friend, and above all tell no one that I am here. You will know all in time. See the mare well cared for and ready to fight, if need be, at three o'clock. Remember the stew and the Val-de-Penas. Have breakfast and the bed in the back room ready for me when I return.'

And so saying he strode off to the house of Don Miguel Florez, chief manager of the royal bullfights. This important personage was equally surprised when he learnt the name of the early visitor in whose cause the servant had ventured to disturb him.

'Valgame Dios !' he exclaimed ; 'Mendez Pinto in Madrid ! wonder if he comes to fight to-day. How pleased the King will be. Show him in, show him in.'

Now during his ride Pinto had matured the advice of Gomez and had settled exactly what he intended to do ; and therefore, in reply to Don Miguel's inquiries, without narrating the catastrophe of P. Santa Maria, he simply expounded that intention.

'Mendez, my son,' said Don Miguel solemnly, when the bullfighter had concluded, 'something has affected your brain ; you cannot seriously mean what you say. Ah, que me burlas, mi amigo

'I would not venture to trifle with your excellency,' said Pinto. 'I mean it so far that since Thursday I have ridden from P. Santa Maria, to undertake it, by the King's leave, this very afternoon.'

And so it happened that an hour afterwards Don Miguel, with heavy heart—for he had a real regard for Mendez as a bullfighter—set out to lay before his most Christian Majesty our hero's hitherto unheard-of proposal.

Ferdinand VII., pious, fortunate, and restored, was in a heaven temper that Sunday morning, with the prospect of a glorious bullfight before him. Wrapped in his dressing-robe, he was reclining in an easy-chair, sipping his chocolate and smoking one of his own peculiar puros, preparatory to attending mass in the royal chapel when Don Miguel Florez was announced.

'Welcome, Don Miguel ; always welcome, early or late,' said his Majesty, with a gracious wave of his hand. 'But what brings your excellency here at such an unearthly hour, and with such grave countenance ? Nothing wrong with the bulls, I trust.'

'Nothing whatever, your Majesty,' replied Don Miguel. 'But



sire, I have to offer to your royal consideration the most astounding proposal it has ever been my lot to entertain since I have had the felicity of being connected with your Majesty's bullfights.'

'Ave Maria purissima!' exclaimed the pious monarch, rubbing his hands in expectation. 'Take a seat, man, and a cigar, and let us hear it.'

'Sire,' said Don Miguel, inhaling the delicious fragrance of the royal tobacco, 'there is at this moment in Madrid a picador who is willing to match himself alone against the best bull that can be found in Spain. He will fight with the blunt garrocha, without padding and without greaves, in silk stockings and Majo dress, like a mere chulo. It is his desire that if he be overthrown none should assist him, and the bull be allowed to do his worst. If his horse be but scratched in the encounter, his life lies at your Majesty's disposal; but if he kill the bull, or fight him until he falls exhausted, he humbly prays that your Majesty will grant the request he shall ask.'

'Que disparate,' said Ferdinand contemptuously. 'It is absurd; the thing is impossible. There is no man in all Spain can do it. You have been imposed on, my good Don Miguel.'

'I can assure your Majesty that this is a genuine challenge, and from a man who will do his best to win.'

'He is either a madman or a murderer,' remarked the King sagaciously. 'And the name of this suicide?'

'With your Majesty's permission, I am not at liberty to reveal.'

'This becomes interesting,' said Ferdinand, rising and striding across the room. 'Now tell me, Florez,' he continued, half imploringly, and coming to a sudden stop, 'has De Veraguas anything to do with it? does he back the man?' For the duke of that name was the King's great rival in bull-breeding, and as aficionados, or members of the 'fancy,' there was jealousy between the two on that score.

'On my honour I believe not, your Majesty.'

'And do you know what request the man will make if he should chance to win?'

'I do not, sire.'

'I cannot make him a grandee of Spain,' said Ferdinand, 'but any lower title or wealth I can bestow on the man who shall fairly perform such an unheard-of feat, a feat that would reflect honour on my reign, on the whole nation. I accept the conditions. If he wins, I will grant whatever favour he may ask and a King of Spain may bestow. But, por Dios,' said Ferdinand, slapping his thigh, 'he shall work for it, for we will have out El Re.'

When Don Miguel heard these last words, his knees knocked together, and he let fall the royal cigar. Let me account for the discomposure of the chief inspector of bullfights.

Among the many splendid animals destined to be butchered for the delectation of Ferdinand and his subjects was one of the royal breed, preëminent for strength, activity, and ferocity, and the possession of all those 'points' in which the initiated delight. The youth of this animal had been of singular promise, from the time when, as a bull-calf undaunted by branding-iron or garrocha, he turned furiously on his attendant herdsmen, and when, baited as 'novillo,' he spread havoc and trepidation among the baiters. Those who prognosticated his future greatness were not disappointed, never, since the days of the celebrated Harpado, had such a great brute been seen in Spain as 'the King's own Bull,' which title was usually abbreviated into that of 'El Re.' For six years he had been reserved for some occasion worthy of his fame; and now, when Don Miguel learnt that his favourite Pinto was to be confronted by the prodigy, his humanity overcame his love of sport, and he was filled with consternation.

'El Re, sire?' he stammered; 'El Re? Surely I believe your Majesty would reserve him—'

'No matter what you believed, sir,' interrupted the King excitedly, as he noticed Don Miguel's evident emotion; 'he shall be reserved another day. The fight shall come off this very afternoon. See that it be properly announced for three o'clock, and El Re be driven in at once. Ah, ha, Don Florez! you begin to tremble for your audacious Don Fulano; but hearken, sir, I have no trifling in this matter. If the man enter the ring, by heaven he shall stay there until he or El Re be dragged out! And take care that the point of the garrocha be fairly sheathed. This brag shall be taught a lesson.'

'And he has your Majesty's promise if he wins?'

'If he wins,' said the King shortly, 'he has.' And when Don Miguel had retired, his Majesty went to chapel with an easy conscience, as became an upholder of strict justice and a hater of deceit and arrogance.

Mendez, who had employed his time in making arrangements about his dress, and in the careful selection of a garrocha, received the King's decision with proud composure. 'It is fair,' he said; 'the best man and the best bull. No *compro nada de gangas*—I buy nothing a bargain;' and after paying a last visit to La Perla, he went to bed and slept soundly.

Great was the excitement among the aficionados of Madrid when over the old bills of the approaching fight, appeared a placard notifying that the sports would be preceded at three o'clock by a 'noveda' in which El Re and a nameless picador would be engaged.

To realise the extraordinary difficulty of the task which Pinto had undertaken, it must be remembered, first, that the picador are usually securely padded in case of a heavy fall, the head pro-



ted by an enormous stiff-brimmed hat, and the right leg, which is always turned to the bull, by *la mona*, a greave of leather and iron. Mendez was to fight in silk stockings and *Majo* costume.

Secondly, that in case of a fall the attention of the bull is immediately distracted from the fallen horseman by the red cloaks of the *chulos* or footmen. Mendez was to be alone in the ring.

Thirdly, that the *garrocha* is a stout pole with a triangular point of iron but an inch in length when properly guarded, and is used only for fending off the charge, the bull being always killed by the sword of the *matador* after he is exhausted by the combat with the *picadors*, of whom there are usually three. Mendez was to be opposed to a perfectly fresh bull, which was to be killed or subdued with the *garrocha* only.

### CHAPTER III.

#### LIFE OR DEATH.

THE hour had arrived : every nook and corner of the vast amphitheatre of Madrid, boxes, benches, and pit, the very balustrades and barriers, seethed with a dense mass of anxious excited humanity. The fierce Iberian sun beamed with unclouded splendour, darting its fever alike into the blood of high and low, of rich and poor, of man, woman, and beast : into the *sangre azul* of the fair Castilian seated in the upper tier, whose eyes burned large and lustrous between the folds of the white mantilla ; into the commoner lava that glowed in the veins of the swarthy *Majo* who lounged against the inner barrier ; and into the thick red tide which the bull was soon to lavish on the dust of the arena. The shadow of the partial canopy overhead lay upon the sand in a clean curving line, like that of still waters on the beach, the rustle of twenty thousand fans created a mimic breeze, and the hum of voices sounded like the muffled roar of the surge. But the flutter of the fans was hushed instantaneously, and the loud murmur subsided to a death-like silence, as the gates were thrown open, and, in place of the glittering *cortège* of the ordinary bullfight, of the many-hued procession of *picadors*, *chulos*, and *espados*, closed by the gaily-caparisoned team of mules, there rode slowly into the wide arena the figure of a solitary *Majo* mounted on a noble gray steed. His features were concealed by a black mask, a red scarf was bound upon his arm, and he bore in his hand the *garrocha* of the *picador*. Madrid was fairly puzzled, Madrid was at its wits' end, as the *caballero*, profoundly saluting the royal box where sat Ferdinand, incredulous of his eyes, quietly crossed the Plaza, and took up his station against the barrier on the left of the toril or passage by which the bulls are admitted to the ring.

Then the key was tossed to the *alguacil* and deftly caught in his hat ; the door of the toril was unlocked, and you could hear the sharp catching of the breath throughout that mighty assembly as,

with a leap like a stag, El Re bounded into the arena. El Re, the King's own bull! there was no mistaking him, for his brawny neck was encircled by a broad ribbon of scarlet and yellow, the royal livery of Spain, from which depended the device of a gilded crown and castle, the arms of Castile. A roar of applause greeted his entrance, and, dazed by the sudden clamour, and the transition from the darkness of his cell to the glare of open day, the magnificent brute stood like a bronze statue, his noble head raised, and his fierce eyes seeking for some object on which to vent his wrath.

On his left, like another statue, sat Mendez Pinto on the gray mare.

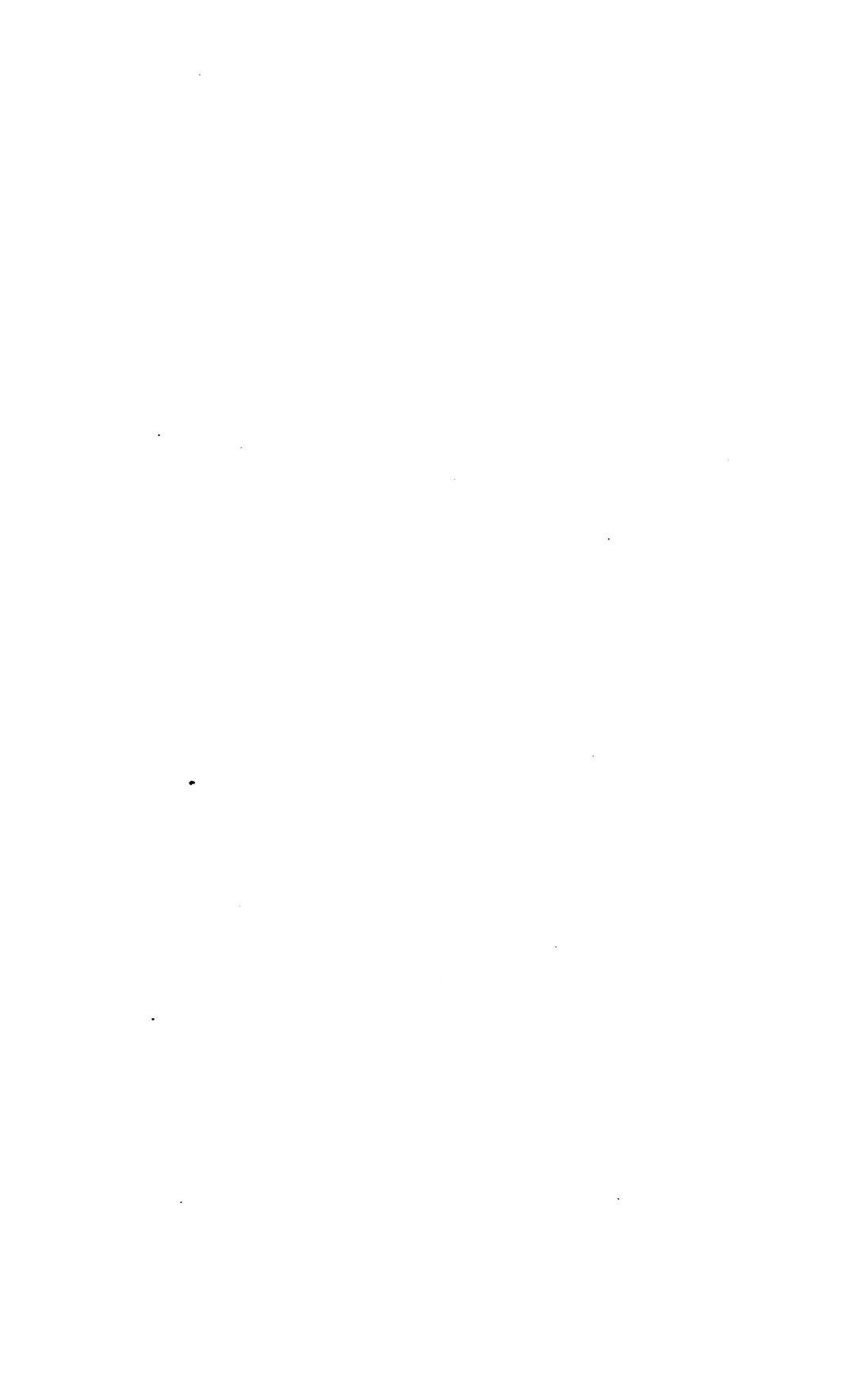
But apparently El Re considered this single antagonist beneath his notice, for with a disdainful toss of his mighty crest, he began to paw the sand. Then the horseman shook his garrocha, and the flutter of the red scarf on his arm caught the eye of El Re. With a deep murderous bellow, the bull lowered his front, and rushed straight at his enemy, and the duel to death had begun.

The sharp straight horns were within a few feet of La Perla's side, when Mendez met the charge with the point of the spear planted to an inch, true and fair, above the shoulder-blade, while he wheeled the mare slightly to the left. The terrific rush could not be stopped, but its deadly course was altered, and when El Re half-blinded by the clouds of dust he had raised, and half-stunned by the shock with which he encountered the barrier, recovered his sight and senses, there, again ahead of him, provokingly calm, sat Pinto on the gray mare. Fiercer even, and to the spectators more irresistible than the first, was the second rush of the monster smarting under the sting of the garrocha, and again was his fury forced to expend itself on sand and timber, whilst Mendez galloped ahead and took up a fresh position.

I will not undertake to describe the many phases of that marvellous encounter—how unfaltering was the savage determination of the brute, and the courage and coolness of the man. If the ferocity and activity of El Re were such as had never before been witnessed by the oldest frequenter of the Plaza, they were surpassed by the dexterity and horsemanship of Pinto; nobly seconded by La Perla, he exhausted every art of the picador. It would be still more impossible to convey an idea of the agony of excitement which pervaded the spectators, from the King downwards.

How strong men writhed and gesticulated, and shouted until their voices fell to a hoarse shriek; and stately women and fair girls forgot their conventional decorum, and with eyes, breasts, and mouths flashing, heaving, and panting, sprang up and leant over to bestow their applause; and how, like a consuming fire, there ran through that vast crowd a longing for the end, a lust for blood, for death,—of either man or bull.







John Proctor, del.

J. R. Battershell, s.



At last it came. Not less than eighteen times had El Re charged home, and eighteen times had the spear-point been planted with cruel exactness, until the gore poured down from one great wound above the shoulder, to leave a ruddy trail upon the sand. Then, as the combatants stood facing each other, Mendez felt La Perla sway beneath him, and knew that the critical moment had arrived.

For the first time he took the initiative. And now began an exhibition of skill and daring never surpassed. With the garrocha held low in rest, and his eye fixed on the blood-shot orbs which followed his slightest movement, slowly, almost imperceptibly, so as to avoid provoking a charge, he backed La Perla in a half-circle, until the point of the spear lay at an acute angle behind the shoulder of the bull. Those only who were nearest, straining over the barrier to catch, like true aficionados, the niceties of the combat, could hear the words, 'Ahora o nunca, por mi vida, o por mi muerte;' and lifting La Perla with spur and hand and will, with the inexplicable sympathy which exists between a true rider and his horse, he hurled her at the bull. So rapid was the dash, that before El Re could make a half-turn to meet it, the spear was in his shoulder, driven with the full weight of man and horse, with the full vigour of that tremendous arm. Beneath the terrific impulse the blunt point burst through the lacerated hide, and irresistible as the keen blade of the matador, the huge shaft followed, boring through flesh and brawn and muscle, right down into the very heart of the mighty bulk; the mass still surged and heaved and struggled against the mortal agony, the tough garrocha bent like a wand, and La Perla reeled and tottered like a drunken man, but the arm of Mendez was as a bar of steel. You would not have said that the horse was supporting the rider, but that the rider, holding by the spear-shaft, was sustaining the horse between his knees; and so the three remained, until the last convulsive throe died out of what was once El Re, and La Perla, though shivering in every limb, had recovered from her exhaustion; then with one mighty effort Mendez drew out the garrocha, and removing his mask, again saluted the royal box.

'And you ask, my gallant Mendez,' said Ferdinand, 'you ask for—?'

'That which I have risked, your Majesty, my life.'

'Your life, man; por Dios, how is your life in danger now?'

'I have had the misfortune to kill two of your Majesty's guards at P. Santa Maria.'

'Two of my guards!' thundered Ferdinand; 'two of my guards! and you come here expecting to save your own miserable life. Ah, scoundrel! you have laid a trap for me. Had I but known before I pledged my word, not if you had killed fifty bulls with your

naked hands, should you have escaped. Vengo sofocado ! Begone, rascal ! out of my sight, and let me never see or hear of you again !

But after Ferdinand's first passion had subsided he did see and hear of Mendez again ; for with the despatch from P. Santa Maria came a petition, signed by the principal inhabitants, against the general conduct of the guards, and the King inquired carefully into Pinto's case ; and finding that there had been provocation enough to justify, at all events in Spanish eyes, the cutting of at least half-a-dozen throats, and that the double homicide was more the result of an unfortunate superfluity of strength than of *malice prepense*, inasmuch as probably any other man in the kingdom of Spain might have knocked together the heads of two of his Majesty's guards without producing any material effect : considering all this, he not only forgave Pinto, but rewarded him liberally. Nay more, he insisted that Gomez and his daughter should be sent for, in order that the latter might be married to her lover in Madrid, and bask in the sunshine of royal favour. Which was done accordingly. But the volatile monarch being deeply smitten with the fair Andalusian, the sunshine of royal favour waxed so warm, that old Gomez, who was sufficiently loyal not to desire his sovereign's head to be broken, one fine day persuaded Pinto to undertake the return journey to P. Santa Maria, somewhat more slowly and comfortably than he had come. So the three went back to their native town, where the family of Pinto still flourishes in the bullfighting line, though no member of it has hitherto equalled the exploit of their grandfather with El Re.

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## THE METAMORPHOSES OF WORLDS

BIRTH, life, death, decay, and re-creation from the results of decay: through these stages of existence it would seem that all things must pass, in obedience to an immutable law. Mundane examples of this sequence are familiar enough: we will not allude to them. But, following a philosopher, whose name we shall presently mention, we would ask whether it is not more than probable that the same sequence occurs in a far grander order, and upon a far grander scale, in the development of worlds. Are not worlds born? Do they not exist as worlds, and die, and dissolve? and out of the results of their dissolution do not new worlds come into existence? An inquiry of this kind occupied the learned Academicians of Paris for several evenings during the city's winter of misfortune. It was raised by M. Stanislaus Meunier in connection with a very comprehensive examination of the phenomena of meteorites considered with reference to their original formation. We propose to spend a few minutes with M. Meunier, whose speculations, though they at first sight seem to border on the poetical, are yet legitimate, because they are based upon facts and general laws; and if time should prove some of the links in his chain of reasoning to be erroneous, nevertheless is that reasoning worthy of popular exposition as a sample of deductive philosophy. The fact that the essay which embodies the hypothesis of M. Meunier is referred to a commission for examination of its claims to be rewarded with the astronomical prize of the Academy, is a proof that it is not lightly esteemed by the French *savans*.

M. Meunier maintains that the meteoric masses, great and small, which fall upon our earth, are the débris of a globe that was once a perfect planet. There is nothing novel in his theory so far; this thought has occurred to scores of minds before. But *some* novelty enters his speculations when he declares that by a minute examination of the characteristic features of meteorites, we may reconstruct the planet of which they are the vestiges, just as the paleontologist can restore an extinct animal from its exhumed remains; and *more* novelty when he endeavours to define the place in our system which the perished globe occupied, and the period to which its disaggregation may be assigned.

Meteorites, 'meteoric stones,' as they are sometimes called (and called erroneously, seeing that many of them are principally metallic), are not all alike in constitution: they are of different structure and of different material. Some are stratiform and of differ-

ent densities; others are of the nature of eruptive rocks; others partake of metamorphic character; others are brecciaform. And it is reasonable to conclude that these various formations have belonged to a globe in which they occurred in some sort of geological order. In the centre, by inference from facts observed on the earth, there would be a dense nucleus composed of the metal which we call 'meteoric iron;' upon this would be superposed the less dense granular metallic strata, which are exemplified in many characteristic meteorites; then the strata of stony character with but little metal in them; and lastly, the rocks which are absolutely without metal. Of each of all these we have specimens that have fallen from the sky.

But supposing meteorites to be the débris of a demolished globe, we are brought face to face with the question, how did the globe become disintegrated? They who have ascribed the existence of multitudes of minute planetary bodies to the rupture of a great one have generally ascribed that rupture to accidental causes. This is, however, an unsatisfactory, because unphilosophical, treatment of the question; for what in nature is accidental? Some unfortunate cause must be sought for the dissolution; some process in harmony with the union of natural phenomena. Is there any tendency to breaking-up in those planets which we can examine with comparative closeness? We look to our earth first for a reply. And surely enough we see what may be taken for the commencement of a disruptive process. Its crust is cracked in all directions; everywhere we find what the geologist calls 'faults,' which are ascribable to an effort of the crust to accommodate itself to a change of volume of the igneous mass beneath it. It is reasonable to suppose that the fluid or viscous nucleus of our globe will, in its solidifying process, behave in accordance with the observed law of behaviour of solidifying materials, and temporarily expand, bulging the crust outwards for a time. And after this expansion, a contraction, consequent upon cooling, would ensue, and the crust would sink in upon the retreating nucleus, and crush and crumble itself into accommodation with the smaller space it would have to occupy. We do not see great cracks on the earth because of the filling-up action of its air and water; but if we turn from the earth to the moon, which has neither atmosphere nor water, we shall find by careful telescopic search that her outer crust is scored with hundreds of gaping crevices, that run for miles through mountain, valley, and plain. These cracks are of vast length; they are about a mile wide, and of depth unknown. Their origin is almost plainly told by their aspect. It seems obvious that many of them are flaws produced either by a contraction of the crust or by the thrust of some expanding matter underneath it. Whatever the cause, the fact is plain that the moon is cracking; and if we could place the same confidence in the revelations of ancient as of modern telescopes, we



should be justified in assuming that the disruption is on the increase, for there are vastly more of these cracks known now than were recorded by the observers of a few generations back.

If it be true that the lunar fissures are extending and deepening, we have evidence of a planet in a state of dissolution; for in course of ages—beyond our conception, perhaps, but still comprising a period that is short in comparison with many that astronomers are called upon to assign to some cosmical occurrences—in the course of ages, the lunar globe must be split up into a mass of detached blocks, which, if they be not all of the same size and density, will slide upon and chafe one another, separate little by little from the parent mass, and scatter themselves about the orbit which the moon has described. A zone of these *disjecta membra* would thus be formed around the earth, and it is conceivable that conditions may arise which would result in the occasional attraction of some of them to the earth, and their precipitation as actual meteorites thereupon.

In this way we are led to regard meteorites as the last phase of a planetary development, for they come to us as waifs from the wreck of a world. The steps of this evolution may be taken as represented by the sun, which is a planet in the state of fiery formation; by the earth, which is a planet in its matured phase (and we may regard maturity as the state of fitness for life), with its fire subdued; by the moon, which is a dead decaying planet; and by the meteorites, which are the results of that decay. But the question arises, do these meteorites possess any re-creative power? have they anything analogous to life in them? To this we briefly reply that they will have *motion*, and motion is mechanical life. It is quite in accordance with modern scientific evidence to assert the possibility of a planet being produced by the clashing of meteoric masses; indeed, one favourite theory of the maintenance of the sun's heat and light is, that the raining of meteors upon his surface keeps up the supply of heat by the well-known conversion into that element of the meteors' *vis viva* of motion: for it is an axiom that motion arrested becomes heat.

To return to M. Meunier. One deduction has led him to seek others, and having reasoned that meteorites are the débris of a planet, he tries to discover what was the position of that planet in the universe: was it attached to our solar system, or do its remnants reach us from the depths of space? In considering this question, it must be remarked that there are two opinions concerning the nature of the meteorites that fall to the earth. According to one, they are bodies of the same class as the luminous meteors or 'falling stars,' of which we have lately had several interesting displays. According to another, they are a totally independent class of bodies. From the little that can be made of the study of the light of falling stars, it is concluded that they are of a low specific gravity and kindle with a gas-

like flame. They are, too, proved to be in some relation allied to comets, which we know to be extremely tenuous bodies. And comets come to us from the depths of space with the meteors in their trail.

Now the meteorites are very dense, they are of stony and metallic character, and it seems improper to connect them with the extremely light bodies just mentioned. They are in their constitution planetary; their very materials are earthly and metallic substances common to our globe. Their density shows them to be related substantially to the planets near to the sun. If we look at a table exhibiting the densities of the planets, we shall see that the three nearest, namely, Mercury, Venus, and the Earth, are all about six times as dense as water, Mars is about four times as dense, and Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune have on the average just the same density as water. The moon, our satellite, is about three and a half times as dense, or most nearly equal to Mars. The density or compactness diminishes as we depart from the sun. Now the average density of the meteorites is about three times that of water or approximately that of the moon or Mars; and this fact, combined with some considerations depending upon the probably relative ages of the members of our system, leads M. Meunier to the conclusion that the primitive globe that was split up into meteorites was either a small satellite of the earth—another moon in fact—or a planet exterior to Mars, perhaps related to the zone of planetoids which we know to exist there, and which were regarded by Olbers as the fragments of a planet that once existed there as a whole. In view, however, of the comparatively few meteoric stones which fall to the earth, it is conceivable that the planet which furnished them was small one; and from the want of periodicity in their fall—for they appear to come with no regularity—it is argued by our hypothesis that the store from which we receive them is near to the earth. And thus it is maintained that they are the remains of a second moon that once accompanied our earth, but that ages ago crumbled to decay. That the earth has not always received this meteoric pelting is suggested by the rarity with which meteoric masses are found in any but the most recent geological formations. And if the store of meteorites from this source is small, the time must come when it will be exhausted and no more will fall. But then, if these speculations have any foundation, the supply will one day, in æons to come, be renewed, and that at the expense of our existing moon.

Such is a brief and imperfect sketch of a curious chain of deduction. In bringing it within range of popular perception, we by no means pledge ourselves to its entire validity. There are some weak points in M. Meunier's reasoning, but this is not the place to discuss them. It is, however, the place to record what is curious and interesting, and at least M. Meunier's catenation of possibilities deserves these qualifications.

J. CARPENTER, F.R.A.S.







*C. Cattermole, del.*

*Edmund Evans, sc.*



## NON SUM QUALIS ERAM

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### I.

SHOWERS of envious silver fall  
On youth's golden tresses ;  
Swift mutation seizes all  
That delights or blesses.  
All bright things decay ere long ;  
Pity 'tis to hear 'em  
Singing each the same sad song,  
NON SUM QUALIS ERAM !

### II.

School'd too well in sorrow's lore,  
Dark reverse and trial,  
What is life, when youth is o'er,  
But a rayless dial ?  
Gone the hours of sunny glee,  
Gone the joys that cheer 'em ;  
Heart of mine ! 'twixt you and me,  
NON SUM QUALIS ERAM !

### III.

Sunbeams, when night's shades arise,  
Vanishing completely ;  
Such the light in beauty's eyes,  
Perishing as fleetly.  
Sweetest flowers fade first away,  
Let what may endear 'em :  
Quoth the rose, at close of day,  
NON SUM QUALIS ERAM !

### IV.

Chasing shadows we're undone,  
Dupes from the beginning ;  
Many an eager race we run  
Hardly worth the winning.  
But when life is full of ill,  
And the heart's at zero,  
Hope alone sings blithely still,  
QUALIS ERAM ERO !

CHARLES J. DUNPHIE, A.B.

## IMAGINARY LONDON

*A delusive Directory*

BY GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA

### XIII. DON QUIXOTE-STREET, VANITY FAIR.

I WENT to see the pantomime, last Boxing-night, at the Theatre Royal Low-lane, and I took some people—small people and female people—with me. It was the wettest, sloppiest Boxing-night ever known, I believe, within the memory of the oldest inhabitant of the threepenny gallery. External nature, if you will permit me to make a laborious and dismal pun, bore a dim resemblance to the defunct All Macs—I mean Almack's; for there was nothing to be seen abroad but wet Macadam, Macintoshes, and Scotch mist. When the pantomime being over, and the last of Mr. Clown's peccadillo condoned by an indulgent audience, the question arose, How were we to get home? Walking—so it seemed to us, standing under the peristyle of the Lane—was out of the question. No one liked to trudge through four miles of London particular pea-soup mud with London particular inky rain drizzling down on him. Besides there were shes in the matter, and one of those epicene problems called children. I live in Unsubstantial-grove, Mutability-road; and through one of those plaguy misadventures which are perpetual tripping me up, the wheel of my circular-fronted (imaginary) brougham had come off that very afternoon, and no wheelwright could be found in consequence of its being Boxing-day, for love or money, to put it on again; or else it was that my favourite bay stepper had slipped on the asphaltic pavement they have been laying down in Laystall square, and had so lamed himself; or my coachman declined to come out because he couldn't find the oxalic acid to clean the tops of his boots withal, or because his daughter had been married on Boxing-morning to a guard on the Great Eastern Railway, and I had promised him, the last time I didn't pay him his wages, that he should have leave of absence to attend the wedding-breakfast. In all events, there was something in the matter, as there usually is when I am seduced into the scrape of going to the play; and to complicate the dilemma, at the close of the performance there were no cabs—or only hansoms; and I wanted a four-wheeler, a vehicle which, normally, I abhor. Why didn't you hire a cab? the prudent-minded reader may inquire. Sir, why did not the foolish virgins put oil in their lamps? Besides, I have heard of respectable families who had thought themselves mighty wise in engaging cabs in advance.



and binding the drivers by solemn vows to fetch them away from evening parties or theatrical performances, coming to the direst of grief. Sometimes the vehicle didn't come at all, and the cabman would call upon you next day, asseverating that it was to Hatton-garden and not to Low-lane, or to Solferino-terrace, S.W., instead of Sahara-square, W., that you had instructed him to drive, and demanding eight shillings cab-hire, together with three-and-sixpence for loss of time. Sometimes the cabmen came too much—as Professor Porson did when the nobleman asked him to dinner—that is to say, drunk; and abusive withal.

At any rate, there were no cabs on Boxing-night. It continued to mizzle, and the sludge under foot grew thicker every moment, and we had one umbrella between three. What was to be done? What, indeed, but to walk vainly into the Strand, in the well-nigh despairing hope of picking up a stray four-wheeler, and, as there are about a dozen theatres within a stone's throw of Low-lane, the cab-finding chances were, it must be granted, desperately against us. Yet, through one of those strange turns of luck which sometimes occur when your fortunes are seemingly at the very lowest, I did find a cab, and found it, too, on my own account, without any assistance from the linkman to whom I had promised a shilling if he could help me to a vehicle, and who cursed horribly when he saw me enter a cab of my own hailing. I was generous, and gave him threehalfpence, and he fled, shrieking imprecations upon me and mine. My exultation, however, at procuring the four-wheeler was but short-lived. My belongings were duly ensconced inside, and my foot was on the step, when the cabman addressed himself to the *argumentum ad hominem* in this fashion.

'Look 'ere, guv'ner,' he said; 'you're a family man, ain't you?'

I nodded, and bade him drive carefully, and he should be well paid.

'It ain't that,' pursued the cabman, who was as sober as need be. 'You 'ailed me, and you've put your people inside, and I must drive you, or else you'll pull me. But look 'ere, guv'ner. My stable is in Bloomsbury. It's nigh upon twelve o'clock. My oss is dead tired out; I'm dead tired out. I've been on this here box for fourteen hours, and I wants to get home and get a bit of supper, and that's all about it.'

'Well, well,' I exclaimed impatiently; 'but what's to be done? and why did you let us get into the cab at all?'

'Cause I thought you wos a-goin' my way, and you ain't a-goin' my way. I'd a-drew you to Russell-square in a jiffy. Now look here—he should have been descriptive lecturer to a panorama, this cabman, so fond was he of the *veluti in speculum* style of oratory—'I'll drive you as far as Vanity Fair, corner of Don Quixit-street, agin the pastrycook's shop, for a bob, and welcome, and there you'll

get another cab heasy. It's on my way 'ome, and on your way ' and you're a family man, and I can't say fairer.'

I wished for the nonce that 'la bella famiglia,' as the Ita term 'our noble selves,' were at Jericho; but there was no help and I told the domesticated cabman to drive to Vanity Fair, in vain hope of finding 'another cab.' Where? At the County office, or in the *Ewigkeit*—in Immeasurable Space. We are all looking for 'another cab,' and, when at length we find it, lo, it pears black and plume-laden, and has the semblance of a hear

Vanity Fair lies westward, and the best way to approach it, ing down the Strand, is through Laystall-square and Lady Go street. Then you are at the top, the northern extremity of V Fair. A wonderful place; and faithful to his word, the uncon mising cabman set us down at the corner of Don Quixote-st where there is a pastrycook's shop, right over against the Fair ceived his shilling unobtrusively, although he was entitled to extra sixpence—but he had himself, to be sure, made the cov —and drove away to Bloomsbury and his bit of supper. A p pickle he had left us in!

'What a dreadful place!' The exclamation was not in my v but in that of somebody in a red-striped opera-cloak, and w white knitted hood, over much back hair; a pretty costume for t o'clock at night, to say nothing of thin shoes, at the top of V Fair, on the twenty-sixth of December. And yet there is plen back hair at the top of Vanity Fair all the year round.

'Yes, my dear,' I responded, with the demons of guilty conse stabbing me all over with poisoned stilettos; 'it is a dreadful p a very dreadful place, and we will get out of it as fast as ev can. Here, cab, cab, CAB!' The last monosyllable was a ye which only capital letters can give due expression. Eureka! other four-wheeler came by at that lumbering jogtrot which, to experienced eye, at once conveys the meaning 'Empty.' I wa spoil child of Fortune that night, evidently. My new cabn stables were, fortunately, at North-end, Fulham, and he wa lighted to get a last fare on his way home. On his arrival in substantial-grove, I presented him with the extra sixpence w of right, belonged to cabman number one, and he went away wi me the compliments of the season, and rejoicing exceedingly.

Yes, my dear, a dreadful place; and let us be thankful tha saw it but for a moment. Yet might that glimpse be enough lifetime, filling you always with the same horror-stricken amaze yet might the photograph be an instantaneous one, and inde The public-houses were on the immediate verge of closing; bu cafés and shellfish-shops and tobacconists and refreshment h had yet another hour of legal life in them. How many more l of illicit existence they would enjoy before the morrow morning



a matter chiefly known to their mysterious conductors, to the police of the district, and to a not very numerous, but very flagitious tribe of dissipated people who *won't* go home till morning, and who, in the significant *argot* of Vanity Fair, are known as 'night hawks.' They are as peculiar a race as night-cabmen, night-porters, and early coffee-stall keepers.

It must be candidly admitted that the morals of the Fair have very much improved of late years; and that the improvement is, in the main, due to Mr. Gladstone's Wine and Refreshment Houses Act, a measure of which the effects have been superficially trifling, but whose sub-cutaneous action has been tremendous. We are not likely to see a revival of those days in which the Marquis of Larkington—a gay young nobleman who was guiltless of half the naughty things imputed to him—purchased a cask of gin of a tapster at the Fair; had it brought out on to the pavement thereof; set it at work, and made all the cabmen and the *cocottes* blind, roaring, screaming, crying, fighting, dancing, or dead drunk thereupon. Worse things were done in the Fair in those days; but the place has, to a certain extent, been forced to reform. There is, no doubt, quite as much wickedness in London as ever there was; only it has gone somewhere else, and set up its tents in fresh valleys. Dissipation is like Mormonism. Drive it away from Nauvoo, and it migrates to Utah; and when Gentile morality, or carpetbaggism, has driven the Profligate Saints out of Great Salt Lake City, they will very probably crop up again some day in Mexico, nay—who shall say to the contrary?—in far-off Paraguay. 'Tis one of the gifts with which the devil, for his own ultimate perdition, is endowed, that the joints of his tail are innumerable; and that when cut off, the stumps defy the branding-iron, and grow again, with mushroom rapidity. 'Tis another of his endowments to possess a ten-million-Protean power of changing his guise, and to be frequently quite as much at home in a well-hassocked pew as in a pit-box at the Opera.

Made better as it undoubtedly has been, Vanity Fair, London (quite an imaginary place, I assure you), is still, in all conscience, bad enough. That notable firm, Messrs. Beelzebub and Legion, have not yet abandoned the booths which they set up more than five thousand years ago to allure pilgrims progressing that way, 'a fair wherein should be sold all sorts of vanity, and that it should last all the year long: therefore at this fair are all such merchandise sold as houses, lands, trades, places, honours, preferments, titles, countries, kingdoms, lusts, pleasures, and delights of all sorts, such as harlots, wives, husbands, children, masters, servants, lives, blood, bodies, souls, silver, gold, pearls, precious stones, and what not. And, moreover, at this fair there are at all times to be seen juggling, cheats, zanies, plays, fools, apes, knaves, and rogues, and that of every kind.' A terribly comprehensive picture; but honest John

Bunyan might have particularised two more items, ere he came to 'what not.' What not surely comprises adulterated liquor and bad cigars.

Yes; here you shall still see Britain-row, the French-row, the Italian-row, the Spanish-row, the German-row, all dealing in the respective commodities of vanity. It is remarkable that the Britons present in the fair generally patronise the foreign marts; while the foreigners—of whom there are always great numbers present—are constant in their purchase of British chattels. The chattels are human. But go whither you will in Vanity Fair, you are pre-sure to get into a row of some kind or another. Here you will find Lord Oldman (he was a brave officer in his youth, but has come to be an inveterate profligate in his age) issuing forth from the Senior Shako to prowl about the Fair, and leer at the ladies; here are young Lord Luxurious and Lord Desire of Vainglory—one he to a marquisate, the other laird of a tenth part of (Imaginary) North Britain, swathed in great rough Ulster coats, reaching down to their heels, and with wideawake hats slouched over their aristocratic foreheads. As they lounge through the Fair, and bandy slang with the infinite riff-raff in the place, there is no apparent difference between my Lord and poor little Mr. Snob from the City, who has been seeing 'life' in the Fair these three months past—his employer's petty-cash supporting the 'racket' thereof—and who will go to the dogs, and the House of Detention, and to Dartmoor perhaps eventually, in about a fortnight hence. But beneath the shaggy wraprascals their lordships are noblemen indeed. They are in full evening dress; one of them dined with the Archbishop Melipotamus this very evening; the other has just lost two thousand pounds at whist to the Pandemonian ambassador at the Tierra del Fuego club. Nor think, my dear ingenuous reader—I rejoice to believe that the vast majority of readers are thoroughly ingenuous and have no more notions of wickedness than a tom-cat has of morality—that any very great danger exists of their Lordships going to the bad, as that wretched little Snob is going, at Irish limited mail speed. Not one dissipated young aristocrat in a hundred ruin himself, and the tremendous public fuss that is made over the bankruptcy of a lord is sufficient to show how comparatively rare is the collapse. Lord Luxurious and Lord Vainglory can stand the 'racket' Poor little Mr. Snob can't. That scandalous Don Juan might have continued his excesses for an indefinite period, for he had plenty of money, and was connected with the very first families in Seville. At length, fairly tired out, the authorities *là bas* were compelled to send justice in the shape of a statue to fetch him. It is astonishing to reflect on the impunity in wickedness you may enjoy, if you only have a good many thousands a year. Look at Colonel Charterhouse. Look at the old Duke of Queensberry. Remember the late lamented



Marquis of Laverflood. As for the profligate at a pound a week, away with him to gaol! How dare he think of imitating the vices of his betters! The prodigal son, even, has no right to prodigality. He belongs to the middle classes. He is only the son of a retired merchant. Knocking about Vanity Fair at unholy hours may, perhaps, injure the health of our noble young friends a little, and may lay the foundation of future gout, bronchitis, and asthma; but they have excellent constitutions; they are not like the effete, etiolated grandees of the *sangre azul* in Spain, but sturdy, strapping young Britons, who have been trained to all manner of hardy and martial exercises. If they fall sick, change of air, health-resortful watering-places, German baths, Italian *villeggiature*, wise physicians, nourishing diet, careful nursing, are all at their command. That miserable little Snob, half tipsy with Vanity Fair's worst champagne—the celebrated Swiss vintage: wholesale price one shilling, retail price half-a-guinea, with the chances dead against you as to getting any change for a sovereign from the waiter—Snob, half sick with one of the Fair's worst cigars—full-flavoured cabbage, price to consumers sixpence—is a cockney and an unhealthy one, reared in the purlieus of Walworth, and compelled to pass the major portion of every day in a stifling counting-house in St. Mary Axe. He is 'going the pace,' poor little wretch; and he has neither the legs, nor the chest, nor the purse for it. My Lords are going the pace too, but they are not devoid of a certain worldly cunning instilled into them by many private tutors and experienced coaches. Unless they are special donkeys, they know how far to go, and when to pull up; and in the greater number of instances they *do* pull up, in time. They may drop a few thousand pounds to the bill-discounters, and make a few phenomenally bad books on the Derby. Formosa may have her wicked will of them for a while, and the manager of the Royal Vacuity Theatre chuckle over the number of stalls and private boxes his noble patrons are good for; when hey, presto! the scene changes. My Lord succeeds to his marquisate; the noble laird comes into his grouse-moors and his deer-forests. Do you know that Lord Hategood, that celebrated hanging judge, was, in his youth, one of the most sedulous and the most abandoned frequenters of Vanity Fair? Do you know that the most honourable the Marquis of Handcuffington, who made that tremendous speech in the Lords in favour of the Habitual Potstealers Act (a measure providing that such deep-dyed miscreants should be thrice scourged with knouts made of brass wire, branded on both cheeks with the letters XXX, and condemned to life-long hard labour in the hop plantations of Kent), was in his hot youth, and as Viscount Luxurious, one of the maddest roisterers in Vanity Fair; and that the Earl of Desire of Vainglory, who owns a tenth part of (Imaginary) North Britain, is one of the most fervent promoters of the universal temperance and

punishment of intoxication by death movement, and a vice-president of the society for compulsory church-going and for establishing three Sabbaths in every week? *Tempora mutantur*; but to my thinking, times do not change half so much as people do. Vanity Fair is still Vanity Fair, but I am no longer Me. To be sure the proverb add *et nos mutantur*, but we are apt to forget the second moiety of the saw.

Are they all young rakes in Vanity Fair? Does ancient wickedness not affect Lady Godiva-street? Well, did I not tell you about my Lord Oldman anon? and see, here is Sir Having Greedy, Bart. stepping out of his brougham at the corner of Don Quixote-street and with his wicked old jowl muffled up in a bandana handkerchief. But I know that naughty baronet well, by his limp, and his great bamboo cane with the gold top, and his shiny hat with the curl brim. He has an appointment at the Café du Soupe with Sir Epicure Mammon and old Count Volpone—'Foxy' they call him at the clubs—that great ally of the exiled Bourbons of Naples; and a rainy night will the old boys pass in the Fair. Perhaps they will meet Mr. Love-lust and Mr. Live-loose, Mr. Blind-man, Mr. No-good, Mr. Heady, Mr. Liar, Mr. Cruelty, Mr. Implacable, and all John Bunyan's jurymen wandering about. Adieu, Vanity Fair. *Sat nunc lusistis, ludite nunc alios.*

As for the adjoining Don Quixote-street, so called from the numerous windmills which once crowned the hill at the base of which is Vanity Fair, the place from its surroundings has gotten a better name, but I know no great harm about it. It, or rather its denizens, take too much to drink sometimes; but I should like you to show me a street in Imaginary London which is not, from time to time, tipsy. Most of the houses in Don Quixote-street have on their ground-floors small shops devoted to the pursuits of honest trade, mostly of a minor kind. The chandler, the sweetstuff and cheap periodical vendor, the tobacconist, the toyshop-keeper, and the oilman abound. There are many public-houses, mostly of the unadorned pothouse category, whose barmaids do not wear chignon and Grecian bends, and whose bars are not decorated with Bohemian glass and artificial flowers, à la railway refreshment-buffet. I think that at the top of Don Quixote-street there is a cheap undertaker's; and, unless I am mistaken, a chimney-sweeper hangs out his sooty banner on one of the outward walls. What, then, distinguishes Don Quixote-street from any of the slums in the vicinity I will tell you. It contains three important public buildings. The first is a church, in a highly-decorated style of architecture, erected, I apprehend, for the express purpose of counteracting, by ghostly ministrations, the superabundant naughtiness of the locality; the second is an enormous foreign café and restaurant; the third is a casino. They say that the last is a very wicked place. I am not



qualified in this particular respect to speak with authority on the subject, for I don't dance, and, even as a spectator, I have not been to the Royal Pantile Rooms for years. But of this I am, from a somewhat lengthened acquaintance with 'life' in its worst shapes, certain: that the least objectionable form of dissipation is that which is associated with dancing; understand me, I don't mean ballet dancing. The ballet is Satan's favourite game; and when he wishes to be especially seductive, he puts on silk satin smalls, and capers in a breakdown. I mean ball-room dancing, whether the ticket of admission be a guinea or twopence; good, serious, rough-and-tumble, join-hands, cross-to-partners, up-the-middle-and-down-again dancing. Sailors, when they are ashore, are apt to lead somewhat loose lives; but I believe they would fall into a great deal more mischief than they actually do, did they not, so soon as they land, set to the heel-and-toe and the double-shuffle. People often dance the drink and the debauchery out of their heads under the stimulus of an exhilarating and innocent amusement; and, while I should be glad to see Vanity Fair yet farther improved, I would tolerate, in moderation, the dancing-booths. Humanity *won't* be good, preach at them as you will; but quadrilles and polkas, decently conducted, may sometimes take a good deal of the sting out of that everlasting rattlesnake in Vanity Fair.

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## AMERICAN NOVELISTS

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### IV. OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

IF it were not that Dr. Holmes, in one of his most amusing pieces of satirical verse, expresses strong objections to the 'many-sided' man, we should be disposed to adopt that title in preference to any other for his own *sobriquet*.

If we want a sound and capable English opinion upon his lighter verses, we have only to turn to the preface of *Lyra Elegantiarum*, wherein Mr. Frederick Locker, with reference to *vers de société*, alludes to Dr. Holmes as 'perhaps the best living writer of this species of verse.' Our own Miss Mitford, also, is enthusiastic in his praise. A critique upon his works fills several pages of her *Recollections of a Literary Life*, wherein she speaks of him as an original for whom we can find no living prototype, unless we travel back as far as Pope or Dryden, while even then we should miss the colour of his nationality. As a sermon on temperance she prefers his 'Lines on Lending a Punch-bowl' to all the temperance songs in the world, and she is probably right in so doing.

So much for one facet of our many-sided diamond. As for the medley called the *Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*, which constitutes so diversified and dainty a dish, the English public can refer to its own experience as a voucher for its genuine qualities, for the book has passed through several editions here, and is deservedly a favourite wherever it goes. By what name can we label such a production as this? It is a compound of critical essay, of humorous satire, of delicate and pathetic romance, of quaint and out-of-the-way studies of human nature, of the deepest thoughts and the most fanciful easy writing, with a poem about every twentieth page, and scarcely half-a-page without a *bon-mot*, or something worth remembering.

We are not near the end of Dr. Holmes's qualifications. He has been a law student, but law he relinquished for medicine. He is an eminent physician of Boston, having been in practice for thirty or forty years. He has delivered lectures on homœopathy, of which he is the implacable opponent; as also a long string of prize dissertations, addresses, and essays; and he can make the most deliciously candid revelations about his own lectures that we have ever met with. His criticisms are most trenchant, and must exercise a beneficial effect in pruning the over-luxuriance and wildness of literary effort in a young country. The giving of five lectures



week for one season suggested to him some ideas on lectures, which we daresay will strike a responsive chord in the conscience of many an itinerant preacher, or of any one who has to travel the same round in any branch of life over and over again. 'A new lecture,' he remarks, 'is just like any other new tool. We use it for a while with pleasure. Then it blisters our hands, and we hate to touch it. By and by our hands grow callous, and then we have no longer any sensitiveness about it. . . . A lecture doesn't begin to get old until it has passed its hundredth delivery; and some, I think, have doubled, if not quadrupled that number. These old lectures are a man's best, commonly; they improve by age, also, like the pipes, fiddles, and poems I told you of the other day. One learns to make the most of their strong points and to carry off their weak ones—to take out the really good things which don't tell on the audience, and put in cheaper things that do. All this degrades him, of course, but it improves the lecture for general delivery.' This strikes us as a truth with which many writers as well as lecturers must be acquainted. It is a pity that this should be so, but it seems to be part of the inevitable tendency of modern times to reduce all things to one dead level of uniformity and monotony. It is only by doing work for the general mass of the people that a man can live, and so his work must be brought down to their level, and then he has no time or elasticity left for maturing any special or *recherché* production of his brain. Dr. Holmes then proceeds to an amusing theory of 'averages' with regard to audiences. He tells us that the *average* intellect of five hundred persons, taken as they come, is not very high. Then he finds audiences most awful in their uniformity. An assembly in a town of New York or Ohio will laugh or cry at just the same places of a lecture as one in any New-England town of similar size. 'Even those little indescribable movements which a lecturer takes cognisance of, just as a driver notices his horse cocking his ears, are sure to come in exactly the same place of your lecture, always.' Dr. Holmes, we should imagine, must have got to his most callous and mechanical manner of delivering a lecture, and must be repeating it, say, for the hundred-and-fiftieth time, before he is sufficiently at home to be addressing his audience and making so many observations at the same moment. But it is very curious what a power the brain has of relegating familiar work to its more mechanical processes, leaving to the imaginative and higher faculties to follow out their own purposes unshackled. In taking up our parable upon such a many-sided individual as Dr. Holmes, we are allowing ourselves somewhat to drift from the professed subject of this article—his novels. But lecturing in America holds a much more prominent position than with us; they have there much less novel-writing and much more lecturing than we have. Perhaps the time may come when they

will deliver their novels in the form of lectures. One of the last acts of the late Charles Dickens was to read portions of his novels, both here and in America; and it is not very long since a novel was read out from beginning to end before a select audience across the Atlantic. But in this latter case the circumstances were peculiar: some of our readers may remember them. Charles Reade, being arraigned on account of one of his novels on the score of impropriety, caused it to be read aloud before the court by an actor of stentorian voice. Should this sort of thing become common, the circulating libraries will have to look out for themselves.

We ourselves have been told interesting stories by American lecturers. One informed us of a magical process of concentrating an audience into a focus, against which the full force of oratory was to be directed; and the larger the assemblage the more power was the lecturer conscious of. A lecturer again, but this was one of a very special order, had the sensation, even when speaking extempore, of being in a most mean state of mind, with a strong tendency to count up to a thousand while listening to the very words self-uttered. The brain is truly a very complex and unintelligible machine.

But to return to Dr. Holmes, he appears to find his lecturing focus in 'bright women's faces.' 'Pick out the best,' he says, 'and lecture mainly to that.' Avoid unsympathetic and expressionless faces—they are what kill the lecturer. These negative faces, with their vacuous eyes and stony lineaments, pump and suck the warm soul out of him; that is the chief reason why lecturers grow so pale before the season is over.'

In addition to the qualifications already named, Dr. Holmes is also a Professor of Anatomy and Physiology at Harvard. Nor is this all—and we have not come to his novels yet. 'He excels in singing his own charming songs,' so says Miss Mitford, 'and is the delight and ornament of every society that he enters, buzzing about like a bee, or fluttering like a humming-bird, exceedingly difficult to catch, unless he is really wanted for some kind act, and then you are sure of him.'

Before entering upon any detailed criticism of his novels, must give a few brief specimens of his happy facility in occasional verse. The following, which strikes us as containing much sound wisdom in very few lines, is from a piece of considerable length entitled *Urania; a Rhymed Lesson*. The poem was delivered before the Boston Mercantile Library Association, so long ago 1846. Here is Dr. Holmes's advice to his age:

'Don't catch the fidgets; you have found your place  
Just in the focus of a nervous race,  
Fretful to change, and rabid to discuss,  
Full of excitements, always in a fuss;—



Think of the patriarchs; then compare as men  
 These lean-cheek'd maniacs of the tongue and pen!  
 Run if you like, but try to keep your breath;  
 Work like a man, but don't be work'd to death;  
 And with new notions—let me change the rule—  
 Don't strike the iron till it's slightly cool.'

Is not this an idealised medical prescription? Dr. Holmes belongs to a healthy and comfortable school of philosophy. No believer he in the value of nervous excitements or raw enthusiasm. In *Astræa*, another long poem, we find a morsel of muscular Christianity, served up with an exceedingly witty pungency:

'Perhaps too far in these considerate days  
 Has patience carried her submissive ways;  
 Wisdom has taught us to be calm and meek,  
 To take one blow and turn the other cheek;  
 It is not written what a man shall do,  
 If the rude caitiff strike the other too!'

*Apropos* of Dr. Holmes's views, we may quote a few lines from the *Urania*, wherein comparison is made between two individuals of somewhat opposite tendencies:

'By the white neckcloth with its straighten'd tie,  
 The sober hat, the Sabbath-speaking eye,  
 Severe and smileless, he that runs may read  
 The stern disciple of Geneva's creed.  
 Decent and slow, behold his solemn march;  
 Silent he enters through yon crowded arch.  
 A livelier bearing of the outward man,  
 The light-hued gloves, the undevout ratan,  
 Now smartly raised, or half-profanely twirl'd—  
 A bright fresh twinkle from the week-day world—  
 Tell their plain story;—yes, thine eyes behold  
 A cheerful Christian from the liberal fold.'

With Miss Mitford's brief description of Dr. Holmes's personal appearance, given above, to guide us, we should say that in the latter portion of the fragment just quoted, he has had his eye turned in some degree upon himself; at all events the picture of the 'cheerful Christian' harmonises very well with Dr. Holmes as generally seen through the medium of his books. And no unpleasant picture it is: we are rather partial to cheerful Christians ourselves.

Here is some more of his thought following a similar direction, from the *Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*: 'How curious it is that we always consider solemnity, and the absence of all gay surprises and encounter of wits, as essential to the idea of the future life of those whom we thus deprive of half their faculties, and then call blessed! There are not a few who, even in this life, seem to be preparing themselves for that smileless eternity to which they look forward, by banishing all gaiety from their hearts and all

joyousness from their countenances. I meet one such in the street not unfrequently, a person of intelligence and education, but who gives me (and all that he passes) such a rayless and chilling look of recognition—something as if he were one of Heaven's assessors, come down to "doom" every acquaintance he met—that I have sometimes begun to sneeze on the spot, and gone home with a violent cold, dating from that instant. I don't doubt he would cut his kitten's tail off, if he caught her playing with it. Please tell me, who taught her to play with it?' This paragraph is a perfect example of Dr. Holmes's manner of writing. His thoughts are always the reverse of meagre, they are brought out definitely and clearly, and they are for the most part polished and finished by a sly and genial turn of humour.

Sala says Holmes is essentially what is termed a 'funny fellow.' This is a very inadequate epithet for our good Doctor, but for many years his own circle of friends thought him so witty that they never dreamed him capable of graver or continuous work. He was brilliancy and sparkle in perfection, they allowed; but when solid and lengthy volumes appeared, they were quite astonished.

With the appearance of the *Atlantic Monthly* a new era began in Dr. Holmes's literary career. He did not cease to be a wit, but he considerably enlarged his scope and ceased to be merely witty. His friends considered this but a flash in the pan, and that it could not last long; but at the present time we find Dr. Holmes still a contributor to the *Atlantic Monthly*, and his writings continue to improve.

Instead of improve, perhaps we ought to say keep to their standard, for to our fancy Dr. Holmes has never gone beyond the *Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* for real power and unflagging vivacity and originality. And we suppose, after all, this book of many colours may lay claim to the title of novel. It has characters, a scene, and a plot. The scene is a boarding-house, and the plot is a love-affair. The characters are very various. There is our friend the Autocrat, himself anonymous, but in *propria personâ*, and very intimately connected with a Professor, who never appears personally on the scene, but whose good things we enjoy just the same. There is a divinity student, and there is 'the young fellow whom they call John.' We have also a temporary boarder from the country, 'consisting of a somewhat more than middle-aged female, with a parchment forehead and a dry little *frisette* shingling it, a sallow neck with a necklace of gold beads, a black dress too rusty for recent grief, and contours in *basso-relievo*.' We must not forget 'the old gentleman opposite,' nor, last but not least, the pale schoolmistress who so often paces alone 'the long path,' and finds it at last lead so mysteriously into the long path of love.

The plot, however, in this volume, is very faintly marked; but



Dr. Holmes has the rare faculty of keeping up the reader's interest with the smallest possible quantity of complicated machinery. His style is so easy and varied, his turns of thought are so brilliant and unexpected, and genial humour and playful satire so colour all his pages, that our pleasure in reading his books never for a moment flags. The jaded reviewer of the day, who has a bushel of novels brought before him every week which must be read and commented upon, has not the same lively enthusiasm for romance as the young Miss just admitted to the glowing field of the circulating library; but we have seen such jaded reviewer take up a novel of Dr. Holmes's, and read it for pleasure, and for hours at a time.

When we have once read a book of Dr. Holmes's, we may take it up at any time, and read a page or two, or a chapter or two, with a certainty of falling upon some racy observation, some wondrously pungent but delicate and mirthful morsel of satire, some thought seriously worth remembering. He does not allow himself to be didactic, but there are many highly-esteemed prosers in whose volumes there is not half the wisdom, the concentrated experience, and the suggestiveness, which are to be found in any chapter of Dr. Holmes's.

The *Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table* is so rich in good things, that it is difficult to quote from it: one does not know where to begin. The following paragraph is a noticeable mixture of medically-tinctured thought on social matters, with Darwinism. It is sage, and to some extent true:

'We are forming an aristocracy, as you may observe, in this country—not a *gratia-Dei*, nor a *jure-divino* one—but a *de-facto* upper stratum of being, which floats over the turbid waves of common life as the iridescent film you may have seen spreading over the water about our wharves—very splendid, though its origin may have been tar, tallow, train-oil, or other such unctuous commodities. . . . Of course, money is its corner-stone. But now observe this. Money kept for two or three generations transforms a race; I don't mean merely in manners and hereditary culture, but in blood and bone. Money buys air and sunshine, in which children grow up more kindly, of course, than in close back streets; it buys country places to give them happy and healthy summers, good nursing, good doctoring, and the best cuts of beef and mutton. When the spring-chickens come to market—I beg your pardon, that is not what I was going to speak of. As the young females of each successive season come on, the finest specimens among them, other things being equal, are apt to attract those who can afford the expensive luxury of beauty. The physical character of the next generation rises in consequence. . . . The weak point in our chryso-aristocracy is the same I have alluded to in connection with cheap dandyism. Its thoroughness and its high-caste gallantry, are not so manifest as the plate-windows, and the more or less

legitimate heraldry of its coach-panels. . . . Our young men might gild their spurs, but they need not win them.'

If gold gained by struggling in the tallow-market, or by a lucky discovery of petroleum, is to be taken as the sole basis of progress towards the highest type of humanity, the true aristoi, and if hereditary facility of access to the best cuts of beef and mutton is the sole prop for sustaining such type when once produced, we can scarcely expect anything more to come of it than such pseudo-elevation as Dr. Holmes alludes to. Elsewhere he satirises more strongly than in the above paragraph the plate-glass gentility of the plutocracy. Let us try and remember that such constitute but a portion of American society, and let Dr. Holmes remember not to call such a portion its aristocracy.

Perhaps the best known of the poetical portion of this volume is the wonderful story of the 'One-hoss Shay.' We will quote one brief effusion, however, which is quite as amusing in its way. It purports to be by an old Latin tutor, who had become so saturated with the language as to let it encroach upon the purity of his English. The poem's title is 'Æstivation :'

'In candent ire the solar splendour flames;  
The foles, languescent, pend from arid rames;  
His humid front the cive, anhelng, wipes  
And dreams of errng on ventiferous ripes.  
How dulce to vïve occult to mortal eyes,  
Dorm on the herb with none to supervise,  
Carp the suave berries from the crescent vine,  
And bibe the flow from longicaudate kine!  
To me, alas, no verdurous visions come,  
Save yon exiguous pool's conferva-scum;  
No concave vast repeats the tender hue  
That laves my milk-jug with celestial blue!  
Me wretched! Let me curr to quercine shades!  
Effund your albid hausts, lactiferous maids!  
O might I vole to some umbrageous clump,—  
Depart—be off—excede, evade, erump!'

*Elsie Venner* is a novel of a more ordinary and less lyrical construction. The suggestion upon which it is based is, however, say the least of it, extraordinary. The question raised is one deep and difficult by far to come within the range of the average novel-reading class; a class whose greater proportion must always consist of young girls. Such a subject is far better suited to abstruse medical essay. However, the covers of a novel appear to be omnivorous, and we never know what out-of-the-way hypothesis or startling theory we may not meet with therein. Nothing seems too trifling or too serious for a novel.

In the preface to his succeeding work, the *Guardian Angel*, the author defines the idea from which *Elsie Venner* originated.



based itself,' says Dr. Holmes, 'upon an experiment which some thought cruel, even on paper. It imagined an alien element introduced into the blood of a human being before that being saw the light. It showed a human nature developing itself in conflict with the ophidian characteristics and instincts impressed upon it during the pre-natal period. Whether anything like this ever happened, or was possible, mattered little; it enabled me, at any rate, to suggest the limitations of human responsibility in a simple and effective way.' In plainer terms, a woman is stung during pregnancy by a rattlesnake, and her daughter, Elsie Venner, exhibits in consequence certain characteristics belonging, or attributed to, the loathsome reptile. Let us hope that such a result is impossible; we may, at all events, rejoice that the Elsie Venner of the story is at length enabled to throw off the hideous influence. Worked up with consummate ability into a story, and so surrounded with vigorous pictures of life and humorous studies, that we lose the bareness of the underlying idea, the speculation is yet of somewhat too grave a nature for a romance.

The real purpose of this, and its companion volume, the *Guardian Angel*, is only alluded to in the preface to the latter, and as nothing of this undercurrent is made obtrusive in the stories, 'the large majority of those whom my book reaches,' says Dr. Holmes, 'not being preface-readers, will never suspect anything to harm them beyond the simple facts of the narrative.' This purpose is a 'protest against the scholastic tendency to shift the total responsibility of all human action from the infinite to the finite;' and, lest people should be alarmed at such doctrine, Dr. Holmes is careful, both here and elsewhere, to define it more strictly. He does not desire to weaken moral obligation, he remarks in the *Autocrat*, but to define it. This is rather a heavy subject for a magazine, still for us to appreciate these novels properly, we must devote a few lines more to Dr. Holmes's explanations. 'The fluent, self-determining power of human beings,' he observes—and with this power we are more familiar under the term free-will—'is a very strictly limited agency in the universe. The chief planes of its enclosing solid are, of course, organisation, education, condition.' In simpler words, we do not choose where we shall be born, how we shall be educated, or in what position in life we shall be placed. We can now proceed to the more particular consideration of the *Guardian Angel*, which, however difficult may be its underlying idea, is overlaid with such humorous description and fanciful play, that we may easily forget there is anything of an abstruse nature connected with it.

The motive of the *Guardian Angel* is one that comes more nearly within our experience than that of *Elsie Venner*. It is the tracing of hereditary qualities from generation to generation, and how the organisation of our ancestors, mental, moral, and physical, affects our own. We can all call to mind examples of children

taking after their parents or grandparents. We ourselves recollect a case of an individual, all whose ancestors, so far as he could gather, were noted for Roman noses and curiously-shaped thumbs. He has inherited the thumb, but not the nose; perhaps some of his family have been blessed with the Roman nose, but the ordinary thumb only. This, however, does not go quite so far as Dr. Holme's theory, under which, at one period of the individual's development the nose might be imagined as endeavouring to assert itself; another, the thumb, according as the influence of this or that remote ancestor from whom these peculiarities were derived, was in the ascendant. We are, however, scarcely doing Dr. Holmes justice in this illustration. It is in the mental and moral, or, to speak generally, in the spiritual sphere, that he makes the hereditary influence acting upon the individual, and, as it were, battling for supremacy. And this inner and unseen part of our nature is, of course, much more plastic than the organism composed of bones and muscles.

In the preface to the *Guardian Angel*, we find quoted a statement of Jonathan Edwards the younger, in illustration of this. It is of a brutal wretch in Newhaven, who was abusing his father, when the old man cried out, "Don't drag me any further, for I didn't drag my father beyond this tree."

In the development of Myrtle Hazard, the heroine of the *Guardian Angel*, the force of hereditary influences is shown in action. Ann Holyoake, a Puritan martyr, whose portrait is preserved by her family, is one of those who, under the hypothesis that 'some, at least, who have long been dead, may enjoy a kind of secondary or imperfect, yet self-conscious life, in these bodily tenements where we are in the habit of considering exclusively our own,' forms an element not to be lost sight of in determining Myrtle's growth and development. There was a resemblance between the features of the martyred lady and of Myrtle's mother, and a tradition had always existed in the family that the spirit of the martyr exercised a sort of supervision over her descendants. Another ancestor, being something akin to the 'spiritual medium' of the present day, was accused of sorcery in the eighteenth century. Another was Judith Pride, a famous beauty of the richest and most vigorous type. A tinge of aboriginal blood is brought into the family by the marriage of Jeremy Withers to the russet-cheeked Virginia Wild, of which couple, through their offspring, Candace, Myrtle is the granddaughter. Jeremy Withers's first wife had been a 'delicate, melancholic girl who matured into a sad-eyed woman, and bore him two children, both of whom inherited her temperament.' One of these, Silence Withers, is Myrtle's aunt, and has the charge of her bringing-up, the child's father and mother having died young in India, where she was born. Silence Withers is one of those negatively virtuous persons, who have not sufficient strength to be positive in either good



or evil. Dr. Holmes is very fond of putting down to their right place in Nature such emaciated characters, who get credit for goodness when the truth is that their nature is only cold.

Myrtle, the child born amongst influences so curiously opposite, is a splendid little creature, with a bright-red lip like a cherry, and a strong will of her own. She and her aunt are naturally opposing forces, and the under-vitalised spinster is compelled at length to give up all hope of controlling the little Tartar, who, as she grows up, develops a symmetrical figure, fine features, high-bred grace, and a plump breast like a partridge. It is rather hard to look upon such an one and say with Dr. Holmes: 'This body in which we journey across the isthmus between the two oceans is not a private carriage, but an omnibus.' However, Myrtle does not suffer much finally from the obtrusive personalities of her ancestors, but develops into a grand creature. Dr. Holmes has without doubt the faculty of description. Myrtle is of the type which he appears to affect the most, an example of that 'muliebrity, the fact of which femineity often finds it very hard to accept,' and whose rich physical developments seem to pinched and meagre natures 'as in themselves a kind of offence against propriety.'

Dr. Holmes's female characters are always typical. Besides Silence Withers and Myrtle Hazard, we meet with in this story a number of feminine portraits, all of which are clearly and distinctly drawn. We have Susan Posey, nice-looking, simple, and amiable, an unaffected girl of a narrow and ordinary type, pure, sweet, and innocent, but quite inadequate to the nature of Clement Lindsay, the sculptor, a young fellow, 'shapely, large-nerved, firm-fibred, and fine-fibred,' with a 'three-story brain,' to whom she was betrothed, and who afterwards finds his proper mate in the heroine. Another girl in the story is of the patient, self-sacrificing order; and we have several slighter studies of the various degrees of vulgarity exhibited in the fashionable young ladies of a city school. Of characters of the other sex we find enough to suit every taste. A pair of parsons, a pair of doctors, a pair of lawyers—one of them being the quick-brained and showy William Murray Bradshaw, who, with the aid of Silence Withers's furtive and old-maidenly cousin, Miss Cynthia Badlam, intrigues for the possession of Myrtle Hazard and her property, and, happily, fails—a deacon, a publisher, and a young poetaster, who is also a 'clerk' in a general dry-goods 'store,' and who throughout the volume affords Dr. Holmes opportunity for some very pretty satire. Do these not constitute a sufficiently varied company? We have one character more to consider—the guardian angel. This mysterious being, who exercises so much influence upon the heroine of the story, is not the spirit of the Puritan martyr, or of Judith Pride, the famous beauty. It is not Silence Withers, faded and sad; or Nurse Byloe, Hibernian and amusing. No, the guar-

dian angel is of the male sex. Byles Gridley, A.M., is the best character in the book. An old college tutor, kind-hearted and crusty with not quite all of his vitality absorbed in study, but a residuum of curious practical shrewdness, he is long-headed enough to checkmate a lawyer, and knowing enough of human nature to understand the ways of young people of both sexes. He makes an admirable guardian angel, and saves his protégée, Myrtle, from many a danger to which a girl of her nature, and unprotected, is naturally exposed. He is the author of *Thoughts on the Universe*, a dead book, from which we get occasional scraps of quotation, and we are in no danger of being fatigued by either author or book. Here is a quotation from it, which 'old Byles' turning over its pages, now many years old, feels to be much more keenly true than when first he penned it: 'There is infinite pathos in unsuccessful authorship. The book that perishes unread is the deaf-mute of literature. The great asylum of oblivion is full of such, making inaudible signs to each other in lean garrets and unattainable dusty upper shelves.' It is only right that before the end of the story, Byles Gridley's book should begin to be appreciated, and be brought out in a new edition, with a less imposing title. He, of course, revises it, and his second thoughts are sometimes rather amusing. Here is a paragraph from the first edition: 'Marrying into some families is the next thing to being canonised;' upon which Mr. Gridley comments: 'Not so true now as twenty or thirty years ago; *as many bladders, but more pins*.' Could there be a happier or wittier illustration of our social epoch than that conveyed in these half-a-dozen words? Such epigrammatic turns of thought are Byles Gridley's (and Dr. Holmes's) special and strongest point.

Finally, as he objects to the epithet 'many-sided,' we must endeavour to find a suitable expression for Dr. Holmes, and can only say that of all volumes we receive from the other side of the Atlantic he provides us with the most 'interesting,' and we hope we have not seen the last of him.

KENINGALE COOK, B.A.



## SIR POISSON D'AVRIL

A Ringhtlye Ballade, in Four Fyttes

### INTRODUCTYON.

I NEVER, I confess, could understand,  
Though very earnestly indeed I wish,  
Why our good neighbours in the Gallic land  
Should call an April fool an April fish.  
Yet so it is ; and since in French a name  
Looks than plain English vastly more pictorial,  
The hero whom I'm handing down to fame  
I garnish with that title piscatorial.  
The knight's biography may make you laugh—  
The story takes you from his birthday, in its  
Wide compass, right down to its epitaph—  
It's not a long one. It won't take ten minutes.

### FYTTE YE FIRST.

POISSON'S BIRTH AND BABYHOOD.

Of Fool-adelphia, city fair,  
Sir Poisson's pater was Lord May'r :  
Perch'd on a hill's high crest,  
There stood the mansion fair and white  
Where first Sir Poisson saw the light ;  
'Twas named, with his adventures quite  
In keeping, 'The May'r's Nest.'  
Here, on a genial April morn,  
His worship's son and heir was born.  
And what can be more fair ?  
'Neath English sky  
There's naught can vie  
With an April *sun* and *air*.  
As we're bent on fun  
You'll pardon a pun  
Now and then, although a bad un.  
'Twas a son with an *o*,  
Not an *u*, you know,  
And heir preceded by *h*, although  
Not sounded, that came to gladden  
The very worshipful the May'r,  
And Lady d'Avril, that morning fair ;

But, sure, of arrangements it was the worst—  
 Of all possible days for being born.  
 Some one selected the fatal morn  
 For that baby—April the 1st.

As the twig is bent the tree's inclined,  
 And I ask you all to bear in mind,  
 Thus at the outset it's confess'd,  
 That baby born on the hill's high crest  
 Was born April 1, and in a 'May'r's Nest.'  
 No sooner was Poisson junior dress'd  
 Than then and there he began to protest,  
 And offer every sort of resistance  
 Against the unsought boon of existence:  
     Turn'd black, turn'd blue,  
     And did all he could do,  
 By going into many a fit and convulsion,  
 To oppose being kept alive on compulsion.

What mysteries are those budding flow'rs  
 That open fair on this world of ours;  
 And, as though they were chill'd by its wintry breath,  
 Close again in an infant's death!  
 Strange, O strange, that martyr-strife  
 Those innocents wage 'twixt death and life!  
 Is it a part of the primal ban,  
 Breathed upon Eden-exiled man,  
 When the cherubim flash'd her sword of flame,  
 Barring the bright home whence he came?  
 Is it a part of that ancient flaw,  
 That these innocents fail life's breath to draw?  
 That deep, deep secret, who can tell us?

Of course we know that it's certain death  
 If the lungs respire not vital breath;  
 And so they inflated this poor little fellow's  
 With air supplied from the kitchen bellows.

The plan was tried,  
 And the baby cried,—  
 A certain sign he had not quite died.  
 From blues and greens he turn'd to yellows  
 And reds; while, thanks to the kitchen bellows,  
     He bellow'd amain,  
     Though he seem'd in no pain,  
     Appearing, as far as he'd power to explain,  
 An opinion very decided to give,  
 'It's an awful bore this having to live!'  
 Perhaps you may feel inclined to say,  
 A suitable motto for All Fools' Day.



Or else, when this little tale is ended,  
 You'll say his wisest act he then did,  
 When he tried as hard as a babe could try  
 Each plan, as well as each colour—to *die*,  
 And failing, did all he could do—cry!

Poisson junior's babyhood  
 Did nobody but his doctor good :  
 Himself it scarcely could serve worse,  
 And it nearly kill'd his monthly nurse.  
 At every single stage, poor elf,  
 He was nearly laid on his infant shelf :  
 He suffer'd with every toosy-peg,  
 As though he'd been cutting an arm or a leg ;  
 And all the chicks in his chicken-pox  
 Seem'd to be full-grown Cochin cocks.  
 Born of an aldermanic dad,  
 What an appetite he ought to have had !

But he didn't care a rap  
 For any infantile luxury :  
 Butter and sugar made him cry,  
 And he turn'd up his nose at pap.  
 They tried to cram down his infant throttle  
 Every kind of feeding-bottle,

Tried it hot and cool ;  
 Only one thing that child would drink ;  
 And what was that one thing, d'you think ?

Nothing but gooseberry-fool !  
 He would drink it cold, or drink it warm,  
 Perhaps the name had a hidden charm ;  
 At all events it did him no harm,—

An effect the nurse was afraid of.  
 When he bolted off the earliest spoon,  
 She thought to see him in agonies soon ;  
 But said, when she saw him chuckle and croon,  
 ' What *can* his inside be made of ?'

#### FYTTE YE SECOND.

##### SIR POISSON'S SCHOOL AND COLLEGE DAYS.

So Poisson throve on his gooseberry-fool,  
 Grew up from frocks  
 To trousers and socks,  
 And, in due course, went to school ;  
 Went to afford an illustration  
 Of our last new hobby—education,

Which deals with us all as equals utter,  
 The prince in the palace and child in the gutter,  
 Awarding every rank and station  
 By competitive examination.  
 Into this educational world  
 Was our poor fool Poisson d'Avril hurl'd,  
 Destined a spectacle to afford  
 Of a small school-boy by a whole school *bored*.

What could a thorough-born April fool  
 Ever expect to do at school?  
 Banish'd by birth from the tree of knowledge,  
 What was the good of his going to college?  
 Poisson was always the boy who was sent,  
 For the sake of his comrades' merriment,  
 For the ha'porth of pigeon's milk (wild colts!),  
 Or a penn'orth of red-hot thunderbolts:  
 Whilst every night of his life he was fed  
 On that fool's tit-bit, an apple-pie bed!

At Alma Mater 'twas still the same,  
 Poisson was everybody's game:  
 He was the one on whom all folks  
 Play'd their stupidest practical jokes.  
 There was one point—and only one—  
 Where he was proof against their fun:  
 Though trick'd in every other way,  
 He never forgot when 'twas All Fools' Day;  
 Open to all assaults, as a rule,  
 You couldn't make Poisson an April fool;  
 And the reason, I'm very much afraid,  
 Was simply this—he was *ready made*.  
 And some folks said, they were not a few,

As puffing shops

Observe of their slops,

The ready-made article equall'd the new.

However, each dog has his day,—  
 Poisson at length was dubb'd B.A.  
 He was well enough read—as far as books go—  
 So are many fools, we know;  
 But Poisson was ponderously slow.  
 The gift which d'Avril's nature lack'd  
 Was simply 'gumption,' 'nous,' or tact;  
 The gift—who can therewith dispense?

In things of this life,

Be it getting a wife,

Scraping the fiddle, or blowing the fife,



Or putting an edge on a carving-knife,  
 Or only steering clear of strife?—  
 The preëminent gift of Common Sense!  
 By dint of constant grind and toil,  
 And much consumption of midnight oil,  
 He managed to fill with facts his head,  
 When he'd better far have been in bed.  
 Cramm'd mathematics and sections conic,  
 To neglect of matters gymnastic and tonic;  
 And left college only a cleverer fool  
 Than he'd been in going thither from school.  
 Then, as babies often cry for the moon,  
     So was Poisson sometimes a dangler  
     After the glories of Senior Wrangler;  
 But, alas, his hopes were damp'd full soon,  
 When he found himself posted as Wooden Spoon!

## FYTTE YE THIRD.

## POISSON'S LOVE STORY.

My theme is love. So, since I'm going to range  
 From a burlesque into a mild romanza,  
 It's time I make a simultaneous change,  
 From tripping measures to a stately stanza.  
 Poisson's in love. His love I won't essay  
 To picture—short and crummy, tall or slender—  
 I never saw her. All that I can say  
 Is, she was certainly of feminine gender.  
 He came, he saw, he conquer'd—he or she,  
 Which was it first who Cupid's contest waged?  
 What Poisson did have wiser done than he—  
 Look'd, loved, spoke, simper'd, popp'd, and got engaged.  
 I own it sounds a little business-wise,  
 This usual precursor of all marriage,  
 When youths and maidens often one describes  
 Labell'd 'engaged'—just like a railway carriage.  
 Yes, Poisson was in love; and, as a child  
 We saw him suffer from his ailments sadly,  
 Just so his heart-attack was no ways mild—  
 Poor simple soul! He had it very badly.  
 To paint his state I won't essay the task,  
 My humble energies 'tis far above.  
 To make it plain, though, I would simply ask  
 The question, Have you ever been in love?

## SIR POISSON D'AVRIL

If so, a truer picture you will get  
 Than any words, from retrospection cool;  
 And then I ask'd you never to forget,  
 That Poisson d'Avril was an April fool!

But away, away!  
 It's the wedding-day!  
 My excited Muse can no longer stay.  
 (For the Muses were spinster ladies, they say;  
 And nothing sets old ladies listening  
 Like a wedding, or even a christening.)  
 Up from the old church-tower there swells  
 An initial prelude of wedding-bells;  
 The sun is mid-day high;  
 Or at least it wants but a quarter of noon,  
 And Poisson d'Avril is there, poor spoon,  
 Looking so nervous and shy.  
 It is a shame, I'm bold in stating,  
 To keep an expectant bridegroom waiting,  
 And men began to scoff,—  
 Both Poisson's 'best,'  
 And all of the rest,  
 Who had come to see him 'turn'd off.'  
 11.50, the ladies giggled;  
 55, they audibly sniggled;  
 While Poisson in an agony wriggled.  
 Noon-tide struck on that spring day cool,  
 And there in the church  
 Was he left in the lurch,  
 Once more an April fool!  
 He had selected, strange to say,  
 For the awful process of taking a wife,  
 That day so decisive in his life,  
 The fatal epoch of All Fools' Day!

## FYTTE YE LAST.

## POISSON'S BACHELORHOOD AND DEATH.

Fool'd to the last, and cruelly sold,  
 Poisson went to his mansion cold,  
 Went to grow up a bachelor old  
 There, on that hill's high crest;  
 To vent his woes on the empty air,  
 With the spirit of solitude haunting, where  
 One woman's presence, bright and fair,  
 Existence might have blest.



How many a heart thus darkly gropes  
 Amid the shadows of blighted hopes,  
 Vanish'd all earthly light  
 From out a life grown cold and dim,  
 That, but for some wayward her or him,  
 Might have been, O so bright !  
 Think of this, flirts, ere ye play your part  
 With that delicate thing, the human heart !  
 Think of it, thoughtless girls !  
 Think of it, men ! there are masculine flirts,  
 In inexpressibles and shirts,  
 Just as in jupons and curls.  
 Often, upon reflection cool,  
 In later life that lady fair  
 Sigh'd for the ruin she wrought, though 'twere  
 Only the heart of a fool.  
 For ruin it was : a silent sorrow  
 Mark'd the 'to-morrow and to-morrow'  
 Of poor Sir Poisson's life.  
 He suffer'd horribly from the blues,  
 And put in the *Matrimonial News*  
 An advertisement, 'Wanted a Wife !'  
 He was answer'd for fun by a girl at school :  
 He went betimes to the trysting-place, —  
 'Twas the same sad day, the same sad case :  
 He was made an April fool !  
 Whether it was being once more sold,  
 Or the fact that Sir Poisson had now grown old,  
 Or that spring morning, unusually cold,  
 I really can't decide ;  
 But mid the east wind's doleful sough,  
 Poisson took a terrible cough,  
 Which during the year quite carried him off,  
 And next April the 1st he died.  
 But as death's not a subject to make you laugh,  
 Let me conclude with his epitaph ;  
 'Tis like, in a certain way,  
 To the elegy well known to fame,  
 Penn'd on a youth without a name,  
 By the poet—Mr. Gray.

**De Epitaph.**

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth,  
 A youth to fame who might perhaps have grown ;  
 But evil influences spoil'd his birth,  
 And April Fools' Day mark'd him for her own.

MAURICE DAVIES, M.A.

## WILD GARDENS

EXTREMES meet even in gardening, the oldest of the arts. At the time when its practice has become most formal and artificial, delighting in geometrical arrangement of beds and harmonious selection of colours, a revolt is making head very successfully against these refinements, and a reaction has set in towards a more simple and natural method. Lord Bacon would have sympathised greatly with this movement. He speaks of a kindred folly in gardening, 'the making of knots or figures with divers coloured earths,' with contemptuous indifference; 'they be but toys; you may see as good sights many times in tarts.' But he is careful to include, in his platform of a princely garden, 'the heath which I wish to be framed as much as may be to a natural wildness,' and then he prescribes for it thickets of sweetbrier and honeysuckle, abundance of violets and primroses, little mounds set, some with wild thyme, some with pinks, some with germander, and so forth, 'being withal sweet and sightly,' till it is easy to picture the philosophic statesman, like the Epicurean poet of Rome, walking amongst his floral treasures and revelling in their *copia narium*. It is indeed a natural consequence of the present return of the national taste to nature in poetry, painting, and amusements, that the same feature should be prominent in the gardening of the epoch. Men are tired of the grand Italian style, with its terraces and statues, its temples and vases; as well as of the Dutch practice of clipping yews and hollies into monsters, according to the dogmas of the topiarian art which was in vogue in England with the early Georges. Even the old arrangement of a garden in formal walks, clipped alleys, and a smoothly shorn bowling-green, which found favour with our ancestors has been discarded; though Scott constructed a bowling-green at Abbotsford, and the modern game of croquet bids fair to render level lawn a regular feature in every garden for years to come. Nature, however, like the beauty immortalised by Horace, in her simple native charms, is always most attractive to a pure taste. The influence of fashion may for a time repress her fascinations, but they are too irresistible to suffer more than a temporary repulse. During the last thirty years the tendency of all æsthetical studies has been naturalistic, and men have been strongly tempted by such writers as Kingsley, Tennyson, and above all Ruskin, to seek healthy and unsophisticated inspiration in the beauties of woodland and sea scenery. No wonder, then, that the country has invaded the trim precincts of the pleasure-ground, and that a cherished port-



of many a garden at present is the waste and shady corner which used to be its rubbish-heap and eyesore. It is impossible to open any periodical which treats of gardening without finding hints and directions respecting the culture of the wild garden. Mr. Robinson, in his *Wild Gardens*, has put together an admirable compendium of information on all that concerns the subject. Without invading his province, or trespassing on the charming wilderness of flowers which he teaches us how to create, we purpose to throw out a few practical hints for those who without much expense would utilise any waste corner of a garden, and provide themselves with a perennial source of delight. Indeed, the special beauty of a wild garden in our eyes is, that amusement and recreation can be found in it at all seasons, and it ought to be so arranged that it should never be altogether without flowers, leaves, or berries.

There are a few principles to be carefully observed in laying-out a wild garden. It matters not how large or how limited be its area, whether it be flat or elevated, for luckily every feature of it can be judiciously made use of, but a single artificial touch is fatal to its beauty. Rockwork that has evidently been constructed, fragments of old masonry, gurgoyles, pinnacles, and the like, must be wholly eschewed. They are like 'the little rift within the lute' that renders all its melody inharmonious. Such artificialities provoke immediate comparison with the spar-grotto and rockwork-screens of the retired tradesman's suburban villa, or with the groups of seaweed and shells gummed on paper and suspended round the walls of seaside lodgings, which so greatly offend the eye with their contrast to nature without. Again, the walks which intersect it ought not to be made of gravel, nor must they too be trimly swept, or edged with box or tiles. The earth should only be trodden and beaten into paths, and the leaves which will accumulate on them during autumn ought to lie, unless they become unsightly heaps. Too many rustic bridges again or summer-houses will somewhat impair the wilderness. Nature, it must be borne in mind, is to be stimulated, not improved.

If the situation admit, nothing is so charming as to have water introduced, either by a runlet or pond; anything, however, in the shape of a squared basin or formal receptacle is to be studiously avoided. What is being constructed is not a show-garden so much as a haunt dear to meditative minds and lovers of natural beauty; a Paradise in short, as the old Greeks would have termed it; a grove which Romans might have deemed sacred to Faunus, Picus, and the Dryads. Nor must its owner fancy that it can be soon finished; one great charm of the wild garden is, that it admits of every new shrub or flower found in the fields during his rambles being transferred to its precincts, and added to the imprisoned beauties. Thus, besides being a delight to the senses of sight and smell, such a

garden becomes a valuable instructor in the habits of flowers, an appendage to his regular garden, which no person of poetical artistic tastes ought lightly to forego. One of the first botanists the day possesses a most interesting pleasure of this kind. Most artfully and yet naturally constructed, it contains every vegetable curiosity which its owner has discovered or purchased throughout the country. All our native ferns, and a vast number of the rare varieties and abnormal 'sports,' which diligent culture or careful selection has procured, may be seen under its umbrageous trees. A perfect nursery of wild plants, nettles, briers, thistles, &c., all of them most beautifully variegated, and only obtained by years of searching, also flourishes in it. Multitudes of rare and curious plants have been skilfully introduced; the green rose, whose petals have disappeared and given place to a bunch of sepals; the umbrella plant; the tree ivy; all sorts of cut-leaved and gaily-painted trees and shrubs, till the collection has become unique, and a ramble through it is a treat to eye and mind alike. A wild garden, which it thus reflects its owner's tastes, is the most charming of home recreations; and whenever he goes away, in some sort it goes with him, for he can always find a new subject to add to his domains. A stonecrop thus brought, say from Ilfracombe, or a tuft of moss campion from Helvellyn, recalls the delights of the summer holiday for many years, as often as the eye falls upon it.

Such a garden as we have described is, however, too full of specialties to commend itself to any one save a real lover of plants on account of any wonderful contrivance, adaptation, or abnormal structure which they may exhibit, rather than for their bright hues or rich fragrance. The generality of men and women resort to a garden as to a lounge, and variety in colour and form is, perhaps, what they care about, as these requisites rest the eye and insensibly calm the mind. Let us try therefore to suggest a method by which a wild garden which shall possess these qualities may easily be constructed. Around most country houses extends a belt of shrubbery or a narrow plantation. Either the one or the other can be advantageously used for the purpose by cutting down a few trees here and there, so as to destroy the regularity of the belt, and running a sinuous path through it, which may be broad enough for two persons to walk abreast, or (which is preferable) just sufficient for the solitary Rambler. A rustic seat or two must be erected at suitable spots, possible where a view is commanded, or where the underwood opens out a glade or meadow. Nothing can be better adapted for so than the trunks of the trees which have been cut down, sawn into convenient height, as all artificial features must be especially avoided. Those who have seen the composite lengths of rockwork which have been piled up at Kew, and covered with Alpine and other plants, will once recognise the execrable violation of taste which won



lar constructions to be introduced in a scene consecrated to sylvan beauty. A few hillocks should then be thrown up side in a direction roughly parallel to the path, and of different heights, so as to vary the uniformity of the ground, and secure for displaying the ferns and wild plants, which must next be sily dotted over them, while the level ground should be carpeted with periwinkles (green and variegated), primroses, &c. &c. Nothing more is needed to secure the perfect wild garden. We have such an untended realm ourselves never is ever suffered to touch it), and esteem it one of the solaces of country life. It serves a meditative mind for a and the tired spirit for the pleasantest of retirements. Un- such a pleasaunce, to be thoroughly appreciated, should be- person fond of studying vegetable growth and physiology. wrote over the door of his study, 'Let no one ignorant of enter here,' over the portals of the wild garden might raised the inscription, 'Let no one enter except he know a ny.'

er wild garden rises before the mind's eye in treating of et, which was arranged on a very different and more expen- than the last-mentioned one, but which was superior to it respects, notably so in the protection which it afforded to tender plants. It belonged to a clergyman, who owned a l flower-garden. Being fond of work, in conjunction with he excavated the whole of the lower end of the lawn, to the twelve or fifteen feet, in an irregular curve, throwing the banks on the edges of the cutting, and in some places, in- hollow thus made, in the form of rough heaps. The width excavation, which ran the whole length of the garden, was rom twenty-five to thirty feet, varying every here and there t monotony. Rustic bridges were thrown over this, and ith ivy and honeysuckles. Trees and shrubs were planted ounds; ferns, stonecrops, orpine and Alpine plants were introduced, and a small runlet diverted from its course ed to tumble down one side of it, in a mimic cascade, fringed r-loving plants. It was the parson's delight to lead a visitor his, and at the end to cause him to turn a corner and con- t seemed a lake at the termination of the pleasaunce, but s in reality an ingenious utilisation of the village horse- The whole idea was unusually well adapted for the purpose it was designed, to form a home for our native wild plants, formed a distinct and delightful feature of the vicarage

difficulty will be experienced in getting wild plants to grow per in some such wilderness as we have endeavoured to

Save in very dry seasons, they need not even be watered;

the trees overhead warding off the direct rays of the sun, and securing them a plentiful supply of moisture by the passing vapours which they distil, and drop from their leaves on them. Where ferns are meant to grow luxuriantly, however, it is as well every now and then to give them a copious watering at nightfall. Every autumn the primroses, violets, &c. may be divided, and the offshoots planted at some distance from the parent stock. It is advisable also to suffer the dead leaves to lie where they fall, as they shelter the tenderer species during winter, and enrich the ground afterwards by their decay. Raking them up involves too often tearing up well-rooted specimens. Indeed, it cannot be sufficiently impressed upon the lovers of wild gardens that gardeners should never be allowed to enter them. They are certain to think their masters lunatics for preserving and propagating weeds, and neglecting the ribbon beds and geometrical arrangement of bedding plants which lie so close to their hearts, but that does not much signify if they can only be kept out of the wilderness. In some portion or aspect of the wild-flower garden all the native plants which please its owner will prosper; it will be for him to learn how to adjust the space at his command to the conditions each family of them requires. And this renders work in the wild garden the best possible lesson in practical botany.

A few words must be added, in conclusion, on the choice of wild plants for the garden. Bracken and ferns will, of course, be largely introduced, with ivy and honeysuckle overhead. Foxgloves of different colours (the bees will effectually mix the seed annually) are especially effective on the outskirts. It will be found that they will not prosper well in too shady spots. Periwinkles, ground-ivy, the veronicas, violets, &c. will furnish the necessary tints of blue; while the pink, campion, lychnis, soapwort, &c. will secure shades of red. Snowdrops (single) and daffodils (also single) will flourish well on elevations in sunny open spaces. Primroses, however, are unrivalled for beauty in spring. Plant as many of the native straw-coloured flower as can be conveniently procured, and intermix here and there a few plants of darker shades, pink and purple; in a few years they will increase surprisingly, and, owing to the bees mixing their pollen, will flower of every shade between pure white and the deepest crimson. The wild garden is never more attractive than in March and April; when these are blossoming, wall-flowers may be sparingly dotted about; arabis and iberis, alyssum and aubrietia, will variegate the more open spaces; honesty, with its mauve flowers and curious bladder-like seed vessels, is indispensable; the sunroses and chickweeds, but especially the mouse-ear, to furnish 'forget-me-nots for happy lovers,' must by no means be forgotten. Thus will its possessor rejoice in a garden which offers delight to sight and smell every month in the year, which takes care of itself, nay, which, without any expense, annually grows more beautiful.

M. G. WATKINS, M.A.



Mrs. Hardwicke had died years before, when her youngest child was a baby.

Suddenly, four years before my story begins, a commercial panic occurred; credit was shaken all over the country. Many firms could not stand the shock; among others, Turner and Hardwicke's Provincial Bank. It stopped payment; the creditors had a meeting, three of them undertook the management; affairs were wound up. There had been no wild speculating, so ultimately fifteen shillings in the pound was paid; and at the last general meeting, there being a balance of four thousand pounds still remaining, the creditors unanimously agreed that this sum, being too small to be divided with profit among so many, should be presented to the former partners. So Mr. Hardwicke at sixty found himself the possessor of two thousand pounds, some valuable family plate, and the handsome furniture of his country-house.

Many men upon this would have worked and raised a second fortune; but his unexpected disaster seemed to have knocked intellect, nay, all common sense and manliness, out of Ralph Hardwicke.

At the time of the crash, his daughters were mere girls—Ellen twenty, Blanche eighteen—inexperienced girls, knowing nothing of the world outside the circle of country society in which they lived. Naturally they acquiesced in any arrangements their father made. In their feminine department—the management of the house, the curtailing of servants and expenses—they saved and directed; displaying talents, energy, and self-denial that it would have been wonderful for all had Ralph imitated.

The Hardwicks moved to a small house in the same county, and Ralph made feeble efforts to obtain employment; writing a few letters to influential friends, asking for government appointments. He was firmly convinced, as he applied for each, that the place would be his, though frequently not taking the trouble to find out the necessary qualifications; then sinking into despair at the answers, which were generally a kind courteous letter, only pointing out that the applicant must, by rule, be a lawyer, or a clergyman, or under forty years of age, or mentioning some other bar which ought to have struck Ralph himself before applying. So the Hardwicks lived for months. At first the girls went among their acquaintances as of old, thinking in their innocence of the world, 'Why should our being poor make any difference?' It did though; where does it not? Some friends were very kind, others grew cold and distant; somehow the very kindness galled the proud young spirits, unable to brook many favours that, seeming natural in older days, now weighed with leading power on the hot sensitive tempers.

It was with more relief than pain, when, startled by Ralph's announcement that he had only fifteen hundred pounds left, he

daughters agreed to leave their present house, and go to a town on the southern coast, where people said things were cheaper.

Some furniture was sold (half had been disposed of on leaving the original home); the money so obtained took them and their remaining household goods to the little watering-place. Once settled there, Ellen and Blanche held many consultations, with little result, save the growing conviction that they must depend on themselves and think for themselves; that their father was incapable of acting or planning with the least judgment. I say Ellen and Blanche, but the latter was the moving spirit in all.

Ellen Hardwicke was a pleasing-looking, dark-eyed, dark-haired woman, with little remarkable in appearance or manner; casual people were apt to forget her existence, unaware of the noble spirit within—the spirit that bore trials so bravely, that shed a comforting, cheering influence around, that was full of unenvying admiration, of strong deep love, for the sister who, throughout her life, had been all in all to Ellen. Blanche returned the affection strongly, though hers was a very different nature, fiery and impulsive, with strong passions and talents of no ordinary power, joined to great decision and habits of quick invention and resource; hers was a character more fitted to battle with the world than quiet Ellen's; so gradually, as troubles increased, Blanche came to the fore, till she stood the virtual director of everything; Ralph being only too thankful to lean on her decision and fearless acceptance of responsibility—so comfortable to his feeble indolent nature—and leaving him the grand excuse, if things went wrong, of 'You told me so,' or 'Blanche said it was to be done, so I did it.'

It would take too long to tell how things grew worse and worse; how Ralph, tempted by a newspaper advertisement—offering thirty per cent—flung his money into the hands of a plausible scamp, who paid the first quarter's interest, decamping before the next was due; how the plate was pawned bit by bit—Ralph could not make up his mind to sell it outright; how often they moved, selling pieces of furniture at each move, their last move being to the Heath, a cottage some dozen miles from London.

All this time the money grew less and less, till at last Ralph could only count ten pounds, and the last month's bills unpaid. Then they tried to raise money on a bill of sale of the furniture. After numerous efforts, Ralph came home (the September morning mentioned before) in despair, after a visit to the most likely money-lender, a man reputed to be enormously rich. Mr. Hardwicke sank into a chair.

'There, it's no use, he won't lend the money.'

Blanche started up.

'O, papa! it seemed all settled yesterday; why won't he now?'



'I know that,' Ralph answered moodily; 'but he won't no. He asked how it would be repaid, and I told him of that money Stuart's hands; he said that might not be realised. I daresay you think it was my bad management.'

Blanche was too anxious, too perplexed, to care for her father's injured tone, as she would have done at another time. Ralph always liked to think his daughters blamed him, though in reality they bore with him, and thought and worked for him, as few would have done. Now Blanche exclaimed,

'But Mr. Stuart will pay, he *must* before twelve months; and you only asked for the money to be lent till then. O, surely it can be managed.'

'I did my best, I can't do more. I don't believe you could have got Stanton to lend it yourself any more than me; but I wish you to try, you've such a confident way of speaking. He might believe you—he didn't me; but he might a woman.'

And Ralph looked half-frightened at his daughter as he made this proposal. He thought, 'If Blanche would go and ask, with her good looks, and the way she has, the man might do it;' but he did not like to put his thoughts into words.

Blanche and Ellen strongly objected to this idea, naturally considering, if any of them had to see money-lenders, it ought to be Ralph, not his daughters; but he had already managed so badly besides being, as Blanche confessed only to herself, so silly, that no one saw directly he could be taken in to any extent.

So at last, after some hours' discussion, Blanche agreed to try and try. She felt the task very hopeless, but it was just a chance so she resolved to take it.

The next morning, Ralph and his daughter went to London, and drove to Southampton-street, where Mr. Stanton's office was. At the corner of the street, Ralph got out of the cab, and started to walk back to the railway-station, where his daughter was to rejoin him after the dreaded interview was over.

So alone, with a brave face, but a sinking heart, Blanche Harwicke was ushered into the presence of Mr. Stanton, the money-lender.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE MONEY-LENDER.

THE money-lender rose. There must be some mistake; this could not be the money-lender—that tall handsome man, with iron-gray hair, whiskers, and moustache, straight well-cut features, and clear complexion, handsome still in spite of his sixty years.

At the first glance, the face was prepossessing; it required longer inspection to detect the sharp distrustful look in the fine eyes while the drooping moustache only half-concealed the thick-lipped

personal month that, to a keen observer, told of a calculating unscrupulous career, of vices systematically indulged in.

Not that Blanche saw all this, though Henry Stanton's appearance actually startled her. Where was the little snuffy-looking person with sharp ferret-like face, beady black eyes, shabby clothes, and skinny hands perpetually fumbling gold, or the hooked-nosed Jew, with gaudy waistcoat and false jewelry, that somehow formed Blanche's only ideals of money-lenders?

Mr. Stanton was dressed in an irreproachably-fitting frock-coat and gray trousers, and had no jewelry apparent save two rings—an unpretending signet on one hand, while a magnificent diamond, very plainly set, sparkled on the other. He looked almost gentlemanly as he rose and bowed, his face scarcely concealing its surprise. It was seldom a lady visited that dingy office; never before had such a radiant vision as Blanche Hardwicke, in the splendour of her young beauty, appeared there. Now that she had got there, Blanche hardly knew what to say. She stood hesitating; then glanced at Stanton, hoping he would ask what she wanted; but he only drew forward a chair, saying, 'Pray be seated,' and waited for her to speak.

Blanche was horribly puzzled, and, it must be confessed, frightened too: a strong inclination possessed her to run out of the room. It was mastered by the recollection of her father, of their poverty, of that dreadful twenty-pound debt; and resolving, 'I will speak; he can't hurt me,' she began:

'Are you Mr. Stanton?' He bowed.

'I am Miss Hardwicke.' He bowed again.

Why did he bow like that? why couldn't he speak? How aggravating it was! The aggravation did good though; it gave her courage. The effort to conceal her fear imparted unusual decision to her manner, while her voice sounded haughty, almost imperious—very unlike a suppliant—as she spoke:

'I have come to see if anything can be done about the bill of sale Mr. Hardwicke, my father, wants. Can you not advance the money?' She paused.

It was Stanton's turn to feel embarrassed. It was a very different thing, refusing Mr. Hardwicke's security, from explaining the matter to his daughter: while as he replied, with his eyes fixed on the lovely face before him, his admiration deepened, till his words grew confused. Overriding everything was the thought: 'What a beautiful girl! I never saw any one like her. They said old Hardwicke was well born; his daughter might be a queen. And they are so poor!' These were Henry Stanton's thoughts; his words were:

'Indeed, Miss Hardwicke, I am very sorry. I discussed the whole matter with your father, and I don't see quite how it can be managed. You see, I might never get a farthing back.'



Here a flash out of Blanche's fine eyes warned him of danger.

'I don't doubt your wish to pay—indeed I don't; so you need not look so angry—but many things might happen. In such cases we are obliged to be careful, and cannot do everything we like. I should like to oblige such a beautiful young lady.'

He came a step forward, strong admiration in his face, as hot blood rushed into Blanche's cheek. What business had a man, this money-lender, to pay compliments, to look at her like that? She had come to talk about money. She drew her hand away, speaking coldly.

'If you will not lend the money, of course I must apply elsewhere; but the money would have been repaid, or I would have said so.'

The haughty tone said plainly, 'My word ought to be enough for you.' She turned to the door; she had failed. How different the view had been from the one she had planned! How carefully she had meant to have stated the case; how clearly pointed out the security; how thoroughly convinced her hearer! And now the thought of failure weighed painfully. Half-way to the door she came a step back, her face softened, an imploring look in her eyes; and in a voice gentle, almost piteous:

'Can you tell me the people to ask? I know these things are not done. Will you not help me so far?'

O, why did she do it? what miserable impulse tempted her to try that last effort?

All through the strange interview three ideas had been rushing in Henry Stanton's brain—'How lovely she is!' 'How position her beauty and blood, with my money, might gain for me asks for this paltry sum. If thousands were offered, would she refuse them? would they tempt her?'

While Blanche stood haughtily, he felt he dare not try—he almost hear the scornful answer; but when she made that last appeal—when the hitherto flashing eyes looked up at him gently, imploring his help 'just so far'—a hot flush of passion swept over him, he came forward with the air of a man resolved to strike a blow for a heavy stake.

'I will help you, if you will let me. There is one way which you will not like it, but it will secure riches and comfort; even more than you can wish.' He looked keenly at her; then repeated: '—thousands a year for yourself, to do what you like with; for your father and sister, if you will only choose to do it.'

Blanche's eyes sparkled.

'What is it? Tell me. I would do anything—anything you repeated, flushing with excitement. 'What can I do?'

'Will you sit down, and listen to my plan?'

Stanton came and stood opposite, his eyes fixed on her face, noting keenly every expression. Blanche's was an easy face to read; she had never schooled her impulsive nature to conceal anything. The sharp experienced man of the world read every expression like a book.

'Miss Hardwicke, supposing you could become very rich by marrying, would you do it?'

Blanche looked bewildered.

'Marry! Who? what?'

'I am a rich man; will you marry me? Stop! hear me out,' as he saw the indignant refusal rising to her lips. 'You promised to listen to my plan. I don't expect you to agree at first. I know I am not what you call a gentleman born, and am sixty, and all that; but you have blood enough for both, and shall have money to buy everything you may fancy, everything you had in your old life; ay, ten times more—horses, carriages, jewelry. I will put it plainly before you. If I give up business to-morrow,—and I will do it; I know well enough Miss Hardwicke will not be a money-lender's wife; I shall be no money-lender when you marry me: believe me, when a fortune is made, few care to inquire how it was done,—I shall have more than two hundred thousand pounds—mind, that is ten thousand a year—see what you might do upon that, with your beauty and connections. Your father and sister shall never want anything. No more bills of sale, no more selling furniture.' He had plenty of tact, that man; he saw where the prospect tempted, and pressed that point: 'Think, you can give what you please to them; they shall live with you, if you like. My wife shall have a thousand a year paid to her, and I will never even ask how she spends it: won't that amply provide for them?'

He paused. Though ambition and strong sensual admiration—above all, the calculation, 'Here's the opportunity to get the very wife I want—handsome, well-born—and cheaply too'—though these combined prompted this strange proposal, he was not all bad, this money-lender, in spite of his hard pitiless profession. Now a feeling of pity for the girl so plainly asked to sell herself—to sacrifice her every happiness for money—money to save herself and family—stole over him, softening the business tone of voice.

'It seems hard to you, but, believe me, girls marry for money every day, and are very happy, and—and—' He hesitated; then advanced till he stood quite close: for once his face looked honest and true. 'If you say yes, I will be kind to you; ay, far kinder than you think now I could ever be.'

All this time Blanche sat, outwardly quiet, passionate feeling making wild work in her mind. At first: 'I never will do it! Marry a man like that—a low-born disreputable money-lender, who I dare say got his money by taking people in: perhaps he's trying to take



me in. I don't believe he is at all rich, horrid man! and Willie in India. I won't do it.' Then: 'What shall we do to the money? Papa said, if Mr. Stanton wouldn't lend it, no would. Of course he won't even tell me who to ask when I've fused him. And the butcher—how are we to pay the bill? We s have to be governesses; Nelly said it would come to that. It kill her to be one. If the man was only a gentleman! And Wi I know he likes me, but he could never provide for Nelly, dar Nelly—though he and I might get on. What would become of Lots of people marry for money; are they all miserable, I wond It would be nice to have no bills, no troublesome tradesmen; with Nelly and papa it might not be so bad; and Willie would k I was obliged to do it; I had not given him up really. Would be very horrid, I wonder? Would Mr. Stanton beat or half kill n

Just at this moment, as if answering the unspoken quest came Stanton's 'I will be very kind to you;' and looking in face, Blanche almost believed him. Almost, I say; there was some distrust. His quick eye noted it—noted that his cause nearly won—and spoke quickly.

'Whatever you decide, I will lend your father the money came to ask about, if only to make you think less hardly of me

This turned the wavering scale. To the momentary thou 'If we get the money, I need not marry him,' succeeded, 'Wh shame that would be, when it really is generous of him! He c be bad-hearted to offer this, when he can't know what I shall I will do it.' She rose. 'You will promise about papa and Ell

The flush of triumph mounted to his brow; he had won.

'Certainly,' he replied; 'you shall have it in writing. I not expect you to take only promises; everything shall be dr up, so that a lawyer even would be satisfied.'

'Thank you,' Blanche answered gravely, putting out her h

As Stanton took the hand, with old-fashioned courtesy raisi to his lips, one of those flashes of humour, that sometimes com the gravest moments from the heaviest hearts, struck her. 'I odd it all was! like a scene in a burlesque.' She looked up arc a merry smile parting her lips.

'Suppose I am a regular virago?'

Stanton laughed too.

'I'll take my chance of that! you don't look like one.'

'Ah, but looks are deceptive.'

Her ease emboldened him; she had forgotten the man was a gentleman. He leant forward to kiss her; Blanche drew b shuddering, all merriment banished now.

'Don't! O, don't!' Then recollecting: 'Indeed, I don't n to be cross; but—but'—she looked imploringly at him—'do me time! I can't realise it yet; please let me go home now.'

Stanton saw his mistake, and, 'savage as he felt, kept his temper wonderfully. It galled him fiercely to mark the change from the bright haughty girl, who had faced him so boldly when penniless and asking for money, to the grave embarrassed woman, looking at him half-timidly, speaking so hesitatingly, so plainly feeling the degradation of that bargain, though she was to gain ten thousand a year by it.

To Blanche's last words Stanton answered:

'I beg your pardon, Miss Hardwicke; I will do whatever you wish.'

He went to his desk, wrote a few words, handed the slip of paper to her.

'It is a cheque for the money your father wants.' Then, walking to the window, looked out. 'Your cab is at the door; allow me to take you to it.'

Blanche took his arm. At the door she paused, and put out her hand.

'Thank you; you have been very kind. Please don't be angry, or think me ungrateful. Good-bye.'

As Henry Stanton stood and watched the cab drive away, his brow grew black, a bitter sarcasm curled his lips, and he muttered between his clenched teeth,

'For all that, she thinks she has sold herself to a sweep.'

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE DIE IS CAST.

It would take too long to tell of Ralph Hardwicke's exultation—he never thought of the sacrifice of his daughter, not he—it would just put everything straight, would save them all; it was the very best thing that could happen; or of Ellen's strong remonstrances, of her tearful protests, of her agony when she found all useless. The more Ellen showed her deep sisterly love, the more Blanche felt the good the money would do for Ellen, the more she resolved to secure Ellen's comfort, whatever happened to herself. Besides, before long, Blanche began to feel the advantages of wealth. How different every one was! the tradesmen so civil. The butcher—the dreaded butcher, who would have his bill settled by a certain day, or no more meat—now sending to ask if the young ladies would like some particularly nice veal he had; and hoping, if Mr. Stanton took a house in that part, as he had heard was likely, Miss Blanche would allow him to supply them.

It was pleasant to order new dresses, to choose carriages and horses, and read descriptions of large country-houses, and know she might choose the nicest; and when Stanton was not present, she quite enjoyed all this. It must be confessed the latter was ex-



tremely liberal, and delicately liberal too; bent on making all the Hardwickses forget their obligations to him.

Of course mere admiration for Blanche's beauty had originally prompted Stanton's proposal; but as he saw more of his betrothed wife, there mingled with this love for the girl herself—the generous-hearted good-natured Blanche, so full of kind impulses, so tender of other people's feelings.

She *was* a nice woman, and her face was only one of many good points. Stanton was clever, with plenty of tact—tact that covers a multitude of sins. He strove hard to ingratiate himself—to a certain extent he succeeded. Blanche was too kind-hearted to remain untouched by all his efforts to please her, so gradually she grew to look upon him as we regard a rich parvenu uncle—often tiresome, but meaning so well that we put up with the irritating habits and odd ways for the sake of the kind feelings and generous gifts; and before the wedding-day Blanche, if not happy, was content.

They were married—a very quiet ceremony, by the bride's particular desire—and immediately afterwards Mr. and Mrs. Stanton started on their road to Paris.

That day month, Captain William Hume landed at Southampton from India.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### BLANCHE'S HOME.

A LARGE country-house in Moorshire, built of warm red brick, forming three sides of a square, enclosing a paved courtyard on one side; on the other, a long straight façade, with two terraces, separated by lines of stone balustrades; below, smooth turf dotted with flower-beds tier upon tier, sloping down to a broad shallow stream, the boundary on this side of a rough undulating park, stretching many a mile away. The present house had been built in the days of the Stuarts—old enough to be picturesque, not too old to be comfortable. Indeed, the only thing venerable about Brassil Court was its Norman gateway, the entrance to the courtyard on the north side; a gateway, under its covering of ivy, still massive and strong as in the days when it stood the fit protector of grand old Brassil Castle, when Sir Richard, lord of Brassil, was first favourite and chosen boon-companion of cowardly treacherous King John.

Ah, through what perils has not Brassil passed since then! fire and war, storm and siege; for it stands in the dear old north country, and on clear moonlight nights from that old gateway has issued many a stalwart trooper, bent on a foray over the wild Scotch border. Into how many hands must Brassil have passed before it was bought by Mr. Stanton, the rich money-lender, upon his marriage,

some three months ago ! and the old gateway stands yet, the sole memorial of ancient glories.

Under this gateway drove, one chill November evening, a young man, bound on a visit to the new owner of Brassil. It is cold work, sitting in a dog-cart, with the damp mist curling around ; but it was more than autumn fog that struck heavy and chill on Willie Hume's heart as he gazed at the noble pile of building, now warm and bright, with lights gleaming from every window, the beau-ideal of comfort and home. His gloomy thoughts betrayed themselves in one sentence, muttered between his teeth : ' And she sold herself for this !'

Ah, not for this, Willie Hume ; not to obtain this did the woman you love sell herself ; but to escape from want, from poverty you have never known—poverty from which you made no effort to rescue her. Hard as you judge her now, she would have stood by you for ever, had you said one word. True, you only waited till you could afford to marry ; but how was she to know that ? No ; you left the woman you loved, and who loved you, to struggle against poverty ; to struggle, not alone for herself, but for her family ; left her ' without one word.' Can you wonder that when the temptation came, when she was offered the way to escape, to provide for herself, for her father, for the sister dearer than herself, she took it ? took the hand that held out riches and comforts and luxuries, and married Stanton, the money-lender.

As Captain Hume jumped from the dog-cart, and, entering the house, proceeded, with the help of a footman, to divest himself of his greatcoat, a tall man came through a side door, saying,

' How are you, Captain Hume ? We are very glad to see you. Any friend of my wife's is doubly welcome.' And Willie Hume met for the first time Blanche Stanton's husband.

Before he could reply, his hand was grasped by an old friend, John Hardwicke, Blanche's cousin.

' Hullo, Hume ! it's awfully jolly to see you again. Come along here, and have some brandy-and-water, before you go any farther. Some of us have been shooting, and are as cold as charity, so we are putting warmth inside, to prevent our catching cold, as the old nurses say. Come along.'

As he spoke, Hardwicke drew his friend towards a half-opened door, calling back, as he entered,

' I say, Stanton, if you're going to the drawing-room tell Blanche Hume's come, and if she'll come and mix my grog she'll see him, and shall have some too. Tell her so.'

The two young men standing at the fireplace laughed, one of them exclaiming,

' We'll see if either of your inducements will bring Mrs. Stanton ; hardly the grog, I imagine. You needn't bother to introduce



us, Jack; I know it's Captain Hume, and he'll soon know my name's Featherstone.' Then turning to the new-comer, added, 'What will you have? here's sherry and claret and brandy; I should recommend the brandy. You must be awfully cold. We've been in half-an-hour, and I declare I feel that beastly fog still.'

Meanwhile Stanton repaired to the drawing-room, where some dozen people, including Ellen Hardwicke and her father, were assembled, and jokingly delivered the message to his wife; adding that her cousin, with Lord Featherstone and Mr. Gwynne, had come in some time ago, and were in the gun-room, and now Captain Hume had joined them. Blanche answered, 'I will go and see what they are doing;' and left the room. She did not go straight to the gun-room though, but up to her own room, there walking up and down several times, trying to quiet her beating heart. She had determined to be a friend, a sister, to Willie, when she asked him to come to Brassil. This was a curious way of receiving a brother.

The young men in the gun-room were still talking of their afternoon's sport, when there was a rustle of silk, the door was pushed open, and there entered, first a white Pomeranian dog, then a lady, and following close a magnificent mastiff.

Mrs. Stanton was handsomer far than when we last saw her as Blanche Hardwicke; and now, with her beauty heightened by every advantage of dress and ornament, she looked as lovely a vision as can be seen in this world of ours.

The blue-silk dress, with its long sweeping folds, puffed upper skirts, and body covered with white lace, set off the tall figure to the best advantage. It must have taken many minutes to arrange those golden tresses into that wonderful wilderness of plaits and curls. The whole effect was charming, so was the beaming smile, the musical voice.

'I have come to see what mischief you are all about.'

Then arose a chorus of many voices, which served to drown the whispered words, 'I am so glad, so glad you are come,' that thrilled through Willie Hume, as Mrs. Stanton, with a deep blush, held out her hand. Hume held the hand a moment, looked in Blanche's face, his own growing deadly pale, then dropped the hand abruptly, and turned to the table.

Mrs. Stanton stooped to caress her dog, hiding her crimson face in the noble animal's thick coat. And so Blanche and Captain Hume met again.

## CHAPTER V.

'AND, BEHOLD, IT WAS A DREAM.'

'I CANNOT, I will not; it is wicked and ungrateful, and I will not do it.'

'Ungrateful to whom? to the money-lending snob you call hus-

band? Much gratitude you owe to him ;' and Captain Hume's voice sounded hard and scornful.

In a tiny octagon morning-room, filled with every luxury taste could desire or money purchase, sat Mrs. Stanton in a low chair near the fire ; the exquisite hothouse flowers, parian statuettes, and dainty appointments seeming but the fit surroundings of the stately figure and lovely face of her who sat there, the mistress of all ; yet despite beauty and position and boundless wealth, there was on Blanche Stanton's face an expression of pain and perplexity and utter misery, and she looked imploringly at Captain Hume as he stood before her, passionately urging his suit, while she repeated,

'I cannot, I dare not ; O Willie, don't ask me !'

'Blanche, my Blanche, my darling, listen to me. I will take such care of you ; what is there to be afraid of ? Come with me and be my wife.'

'I can't ; O, you know I can never be that ; it is too late,' the regretful piteous voice repeated, 'too late.'

'It is not,' Hume exclaimed. 'Stanton will get a divorce—he is certain to ; he must ! and then we will go to India, and be so happy. If you care one bit about me, you can't, you won't refuse. Say yes, Blanche.'

'Mr. Stanton wouldn't ; I know he wouldn't,' the wife replied ; 'and it couldn't make it a bit less wicked even if he did.'

'Blanche, why did you ever marry him ?' Hume asked impatiently.

'I couldn't help myself, indeed I couldn't ; you can't imagine the state we were in ; and I didn't know you cared so for—' A sob choked her voice.

Hume stooped down, clasping his arm round her. 'Never mind what is past, my darling ; make it up to me now ; you can if you like. We'll go to India, and never remember there was such a man as Stanton.'

'It would be so ungrateful,' she sobbed ; 'he has been very kind.'

'Kind !' Hume repeated scornfully. 'I daresay he is kind. You mean he hasn't beaten or half-killed you ; as if one ill-uses a valuable horse—and he bought you just like a horse ; don't talk of gratitude to a man like that. You'll come with me, won't you ?' and passionate kisses fell on her cheek and brow. For a moment she rested her head on his shoulder, then drew back, saying hoarsely,

'I cannot be so wicked ; it is no use, Willie, I won't ; I say I won't.'

He started up angrily. 'Blanche, what do you mean ? Then I don't believe you care a rap about me ; you think Stanton's money better worth having than my love. Well, I suppose you're right, all the world would say the same ;' and a bitter sneer curled his lip. 'A poor soldier's bungalow isn't to be compared to Brassil Court ;



what a fool I was to think Mrs. Stanton, who sold herself for money, would give it up for me!' Captain Hume turned moodily away.

This was more than Blanche could bear. She had resolved to do right, and struggled and battled with her love, with her passionate longing to do as he asked—to go with him far away, anywhere, so that she went with him. It was all in vain; vain the good resolutions, vain the hard-fought battle; these last words of Hume's stung her to the quick—for him to think she cared for wealth, for anything more than him!

Blanche sprang from her seat, clasped both her hands round Willie's arm, her face crimson with excitement and passionate love, exclaiming wildly,

'I don't care how wicked it is, I don't care for anything! I'll go anywhere with you—to India, to the world's end, anywhere!'

Deep sobs shook her whole frame as Hume clasped his arms round her with vehement thanks and protestations of affection; yet a cold chill struck to his careless irreverent heart, as a whisper in low awe-struck tones glided into his ear: 'Ah, Willie, it isn't Brassil I shall lose for your sake, it's heaven!' And though he protested and argued, she repeated over and over again,

'I shall never go to heaven, I am too wicked; but O, my darling, I had rather be lost with you than saved without you.'

Hume hardly appreciated all this; his was a light careless nature, full of fiery evanescent passion, but incapable of deep or lasting feeling; the love he bore Blanche Hardwicke was decidedly the strongest passion of his nature. When, on returning from India to ask her to be his wife, he found her married to Stanton, his fierce anger, wounded love, and baffled passion knew no bounds, and he accepted Blanche's invitation to Brassil Court, savagely resolving to show how little he cared, to show how he despised the Stantons in general, and Blanche in particular; but when he saw her again, the very moment she held out her hand and welcomed him to Brassil, back came the old love with double force. He resolved, happen what might, he would win her back—win back the love he had always believed she felt for him, and him alone—the love that he was certain was his still; and ere Captain Hume had been three weeks at Brassil, he stood in Blanche's morning-room, and drew from her a promise to run away with him,—to leave home and friends, to cast behind her the world's opinion, to abandon a doting husband, and, worse than all, every thought of goodness and purity and religion, every hope of heaven. Ah, Willie Hume exulted, and the devil and his angels shouted for joy, as that wicked promise was given; but holy guardian spirits wept and wailed, and Blanche Stanton shuddered as across her brain came a vision of awful judgment and just condemnation, and the horrors of that hell to which she was hurrying so fast.



zier, del.

Edmund Evans, sc.

A WILLING SACRIFICE.





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When Blanche's agitation subsided, Hume began to talk of arrangements, and inquired when Mr. Stanton was expected back, the money-lender having gone the evening before to London on business.

Mrs. Stanton replied, 'The day after to-morrow, in time for dinner.'

'Then,' resumed Hume, 'we needn't leave Brassil till the same morning, that will give more time to make arrangements. We'll go to London by the early train, and on to Dover by the night express; we shall be in Paris the next morning in time for breakfast. So if Stanton should do such an idiotic thing as to try to follow, we shall be safe in Paris long before he can get even to Dover. I'll run up to town to-night, and be down again at Farchester to-morrow, and sleep at "The George;" and so meet you at the station next morning. I'll send a telegram in Stanton's name to ask you to meet him in London the next day, so it will make no row when you drive to the Farchester station. Shall you take your maid? Unless you're particularly fond of her, don't; I'll get you a fresh one, and she shall meet us in town. And,' here Hume's face crimsoned, and he dropped his voice, 'I say, my pet, don't bring a whole heap of things; don't take anything of Stanton's—that he has given you, I mean—jewels or anything of that kind. I'll give you whatever you like; but I should hate to see you wear anything of his.' Before she could reply he went on hurriedly, 'There, I think that's all; now I must go;' he stooped down, putting his arm round her. 'Good-bye, my darling; farewell for the last time. We shall never have to part again after Thursday. Good-bye.' He walked to the door, closed it softly after him, and Blanche heard his firm step echoing along the corridor.

Mrs. Stanton joined her guests at luncheon, and though she said she had a headache and her eyes looked red, she was as amusing and brilliant as ever. Not one of the numerous party could divine what wild, miserable, sinful thoughts were chasing each other through the brain of the hostess, who seemed so happy and gay and agreeable, such a capital mistress of the house, so kind and thoughtful for her guests. Yes, all through that day Blanche went about as usual; never till she wished the last of the party good-night at the foot of the great staircase did she give herself one moment for rest or thought. But that night, as Blanche Stanton lay in her bed, she dreamed a gruesome dream.

Blanche and Willie Hume walked side by side. They came to a steep mountain, and climbed up and up till they stood on the topmost crag; below them stretched two plains—one a vast expanse of sandy waste, with not a single living moving creature on it; the other, a green verdant meadow peopled with thousands and thousands of bright beautiful angels, and upwards came strains of exquisite melody



entered the room with head erect, and calm grave manner, while the tap of the tiny high-heeled boots sounded firm and resolute on the polished oak floor. Yet, in spite of her bold front, the hand Mrs. Stanton held out shook visibly, and before that short interview was over she had need of all her brave spirit, all her firm resolution to do right.

Passionately Hume pleaded and coaxed and threatened; sorely did Blanche's own heart misgive her, firmly did that heart plead for him, yet she stood her ground; firmer and firmer, repeated over and over again, came the determination to save herself and him; it was easier if she could think her present misery would save him from destruction. Confident as Hume was in his personal power over her, he soon saw how unavailing was that power to shake her present resolution. At last, moodily, half-sulkily, he gave in, and turned to the door muttering,

'You never cared a rap about me.'

Then for the first time that evening Blanche's face grew deadly white, and almost a scream rose to her lips.

'O Willie, Willie, wish me good-bye kindly!'

He came a step back, flung his arms round her, kissed her passionately once and again—a long lingering kiss, whispered hoarsely,

'Blanche, promise, swear if—when Stanton dies, you will send for me; promise.'

She repeated, 'I promise!' and he was gone.

As the door closed behind him, and the last echo of Willie Hume's step died away, Blanche Stanton buried her face in her hands, and sobbed as if her heart would break. Three minutes later the great doors of Brassil Court closed behind Captain Hume for ever.

Two years have passed and gone since Willie Hume and Blanche Stanton parted in the old library at Brassil Court, and now Blanche stands by her husband's death-bed. Those two years have been spent at Brassil in the ordinary round and common every-day alternations of pleasure and excitement, anxiety and sorrow. Ellen Hardwicke is married, Ralph is dead, but Mrs. Stanton is as beautiful as ever, and on the lovely face is apparent no trace of that stormy interview in the old library. When Stanton returned from London the day after Captain Hume's evening visit to Brassil, he found his wife suffering from a severe cold and feverish attack, and for more than a week she kept her room: when she reappeared down-stairs she looked as well as usual, seeming to enjoy society and every kind of amusement as much as, if not more than, ever. And so the months passed on, and Mr. Stanton caught a slight cold, but there did not seem much the matter; so that Mrs. Stanton was extremely astonished when, after the lapse of a week, the doctor informed her that her husband could not survive many days. Poor Blanche was sur-

prised and really sorry ; but, reader, do not judge her too harshly if there mingled with her sorrow and regret for the husband, who, with all his faults, had been very kind to her, one flash of joy at the thought, ' Then I can think of Willie without any sin ! '

Blanche had been a good wife, despite the circumstances that caused her marriage ; she had made her husband thoroughly happy, and now in his last illness nursed him kindly and gently ; and in long after years it was to her a mournful pleasure to remember how, not an hour before he died, Stanton turned feebly in his bed, and, holding out his hand, said :

' Blanche dear, I must say good-bye. You have been a very good wife to me, though you did marry for money. I have left everything, Brassil and all, to you, so you can take Hume whenever you like.' Then, seeing Blanche's start of surprise, he went on : ' Ah, you didn't think I knew ; yes, I guessed a good deal, and at one time feared I should lose you, but I trusted in my wife's goodness, and you see I was right. Ah, Blanche, I used not to believe in any one's goodness ; you have made me see things very differently ; so, dear, I hope you will be happy at last. There, dear, don't cry : it's a very good thing for you I'm going so soon. I've only been a short time in your way, and I've not been unkind to you, have I ? It will soon be all over now. Good-bye.'

Yes, it was soon over—the short illness, the quiet death-bed, and the solemn funeral ; and Blanche Stanton was a widow, with her beauty and Brassil Court and ten thousand a year.

Stanton had been buried a fortnight, and Blanche, oppressed by the solitude of Brassil, had gone with her sister, Mrs. Acton, the latter's husband, and their only child, a baby six months old, to St. Leonards, before she ventured to fulfil the long-given promise, by writing to Captain Hume. She knew where his regiment was, and from time to time heard of him through friends, though she had never seen or heard from himself since they parted ; so now she had no difficulty in directing her letter to the head-quarters of the regiment. A week passed without any answer ; so, imagining him to have left the army, she wrote to inquire of Captain Preston, a brother officer of Willie's, and learnt from him that Hume and a friend in the same corps had gone a month ago on a sporting tour into Hungary, but, Captain Preston added, Mrs. Stanton's letter should be forwarded immediately.

One evening, about nine o'clock, some three weeks after the receipt of Captain Preston's note, a cab drove up to the door of the large house Mrs. Stanton had taken on the Marina, and almost before Ellen could wonder who their late visitor could be, or Blanche's heart divine who it surely was, Captain Hume was ushered into the drawing-room. Ellen Acton knew the whole story, knew of her sister's letter ; and seeing Hume's scarcely-concealed agitation, after



the first greetings were over, drew her husband out of the room, and Blanche Stanton and Willie Hume were alone.

Then ensued an uncomfortable pause. Blanche naturally waited for Willie to speak. She had done as he had made her promise, and now surely it was for him to act, not her. On Hume's face was no joy, no happiness, only a miserable cloud of doubt and perplexity, and a look of shame she had never seen before. Cold and chill to Blanche's heart struck the conviction that he did not care for her—that she had written to him in perfect confidence of his love, and it was no longer hers; and instantly all the pride of her haughty nature rose in arms. She drew up her tall figure proudly, and on the lovely face came an expression of intense scorn as she said,

'You need not be afraid, Captain Hume, or think it necessary to put on so much needless confusion. I merely wrote to you as an old friend, and as such, and such only, I am very glad to see you, and so is my sister. I will go and send her or Mr. Acton to come and talk to you; I am hardly equal to entertaining any one just now.'

Hume laid a detaining hand on her dress, exclaiming,

'Don't go, pray don't. O Blanche, why didn't you write before?' She turned fiercely upon him.

'Before!' she repeated scornfully. 'Would you have me write before my husband was laid in his grave? I only wrote too soon—the mistake was writing at all.'

Hume buried his face in his hands, groaning out, 'Too late! too late!' There was more in this than mere fickleness, mere forgetfulness of his love, and so Blanche felt, and his evident misery touched her. She laid one white hand on his shoulder, saying,

'What is too late, Willie?'

Despite her anger, that name came gently and lovingly from her lips. He seized her hand in both of his, pressing it convulsively, till his grasp crushed the costly rings into the slender fingers, and repeated,

'Too late! O, if I had only known a month—three weeks ago! but now—'

'What?' she whispered.

Hume set his face as for a stern physical effort, and through the clenched teeth came the words, 'I am married.'

'Married! married!' spoke a hollow voice, a voice so unlike Blanche's. Mrs. Stanton's face grew white and rigid, and with a faltering step she turned away. Hume sprung up and stood before the door, but a low heart-broken voice entreated, 'I cannot bear it; let me go.' He obeyed instantly. So the last time Willie Hume ever looked upon Blanche Stanton's face, there was stamped upon that face an expression of unutterable pain and desolate misery, and

the large eyes looked out of the rigid face with a wild despairing agony that will haunt Captain Hume to his dying day.

Half-an-hour later, when Mrs. Acton reëntered the drawing-room, she found Willie seated with his face buried in his hands. He did not seem to hear her entrance, and never stirred till she spoke. Then he started up, wrung her hand convulsively, and was gone and out of the house before utter astonishment allowed her to say a word.

It was many months before Blanche heard the particulars of Willie Hume's marriage. The story was told to Ellen Acton by her cousin, John Hardwicke, in the following words:

'You see, Nelly, poor Hume got into a scrape in Hungary, and made a complete fool of himself. He and Paulet—you know Paulet of the 150th—went there for shooting, and awful good sport they had too—deer and wild boar, and lots of smaller game. Well, they got leave from a Hungarian Count—no end of a swell, a friend of Paulet's at Vienna—to shoot over a whole lot of his property up in the mountains, and there they lived for a month, putting up at the house of the Count's chief tenant, a superior sort of farmer. The fellow had a daughter, the belle of those parts, and an awfully pretty girl too, for I've seen her since she came to England. Hume always will philander after women; so he flirted audaciously with her, and I suppose the girl fell over head and ears in love with him, though she couldn't speak a word of English, and I should think his Hungarian wasn't first-rate. However, they got on somehow, and Hume went too far, and fell into a regular scrape. Well, just before the two fellows went back to Vienna, out the whole story came, and there was no end of a row. The parents, especially the old mother, went nearly out of their minds. They were very respectable people in their line, and had no idea of a daughter of theirs going to the bad. They begged and prayed Hume to marry the girl, and made such a fuss that he didn't know how to get out of it. Willie's a very soft-hearted fellow, and he couldn't stand the old woman's tears. Besides, the daughter was awfully fond of him, and he told me himself he's never cared what he did since Blanche married Stanton. So he gave in, and made a fool of himself, and actually married the Hungarian. They hadn't been married a week, Paulet told me, before Hume got a letter, or something, and off he rushed to England like a madman, leaving his wife behind. She didn't know what to do, poor girl, so Paulet brought her to England with him. I don't think he got many thanks from her husband for doing it. And now Willie's exchanged into a regiment in India, and gone off there, swearing he never means to come back to England again, and he's sent his wife back to Hungary, to her own people. So he's made a nice mess of the affair altogether.'



Months and years have passed since Henry Stanton died, and his widow has never married again, or even reappeared in society. Great has been the surprise, numerous the speculations as to the cause of her seclusion, and signal the disappointment of the heiress-hunting part of the London world. Indeed, several of these latter have been down to Brassil with the avowed intention of making up to the beautiful widow, but received there such scanty encouragement that the most daring and reckless of them has never been bold enough to ask the important question.

No ; Blanche Stanton lives on at Brassil, loved and revered for her kind words and unselfish deeds and loving charity by high and low, rich and poor, round her old north-country home ; while deep in her heart still dwells the image of the soldier far away in India ; and those who know her best say it will always be so, and that she will live and die Blanche Stanton, the money-lender's widow.

K. K. K.

## CHARLES DICKENS'S NOMENCLATURE

IN TWO PARTS :—PART I.

[These articles were written nearly two years ago, and put to press, but unavoidably delayed—long before the appearance of Mr. Forster's inimitable biography of the great novelist. In that work it is asserted, and truly, that Dickens adopted many real names. Admittedly, as herein stated; yet at the same time the fact is clear that the novelist coined the bulk of his cognomenæ. It cannot be doubted, save in the story, where can be found a Tappertit, a Micawber, a Swiveller, a Sweetdeeps? Another fact. Previously to the publication in America of the *Dickens Dictionary* the writer of these articles had been engaged for three years in the preparation of an exhaustive, and altogether dissimilar, *Concordance to the Works of Charles Dickens*. The compilers of the American Dictionary assert most randomly that the Dickens characters number *fifteen hundred*. This statement is not correct. The invented characters are nine hundred and seventy-one, as herein stated, neither more nor less. In the Dictionary, places and institutions, public matters and things, are counted in, as also some personages reckoned thrice over, as Noah Claypole; while realities are added, as Eliza Grimwood, H. K. Browne, Miss Martineau, George IV., and *Dickens's father*.]

The subject is immense. Rejecting all double names, as 'Dot' for Mary Peerybingle, 'The Patriarch' for Casby, 'Bolter' for Claypole, or Harris for Short the showman (which, being enumerated, would swell the long list to a thousand and three), the characters in the works of Charles Dickens, the definite individual creations of his dazzling genius, are *nine hundred and seventy-one*!

This amazing array of fictitious personages is comprehended in his twenty-four works (reckoning-in the reprinted pieces, say twenty-five) from the *Sketches to Edwin Drood*. I omit the *Child's History of England* and *Memoirs of Grimaldi*; the first contains no invented character; the second was but edited by Dickens.

Excepting these latter, and also the Christmas Numbers, mere portions of which—not invariably recognisable, and ephemeral at best—were his work, I include *all else*.

These nine hundred and seventy-one created personages may be classified as follows: 1 marquis, 6 lords, 6 ladies, 5 right honourables, 8 sirs, 1 don, 1 count; 1 general, 2 majors, 3 colonels, 3 (army) captains, 2 (army) lieutenants, 2 (army) doctors, 1 artilleryman, 1 dragoon, 1 foot-soldier; 1 (navy) lieutenant, 6 (sea) captains, 1 purser, 1 pilot, 11 boatmen; 326 'ladies and gentlemen' (by education and position); 10 clergymen, curates, and dissenting ministers, 1 choir-master,\* 1 verger, 1 church clerk, 2 sextons, 1 pew-

\* Grewgious damned him to the National Anthem!



opener; 8 physicians and surgeons, 6 medical students, 6 professors of chemistry and other sciences, 13 schoolmasters and assistants, 3 authors, 4 editors, 1 war correspondent (a 'Brick'! newsman, 1 ballad-seller, 2 singers, 10 actors (actresses and female professionals under the head of 'ladies'), 3 showmen, 4 circus people, 1 student of chemistry, 1 artist, 1 bellringer, 4 doctor-law and divinity, 2 special professors, 2 pugilists ('professor science'!), 2 teachers of music; 1 justice, 1 stipendiary magistrate, 5 counsel, 13 solicitors and attorneys, 16 law-clerks, 1 common-law former, 2 'detectives,' 4 constables, 5 proctors and managers, 1 notary, 2 law-agents, 6 sheriffs'-officers and bailiffs, 1 hangman, 2 turnkeys, 5 beadles; 21 shopkeepers, 3 bankers, 21 merchants, 9 brokers, 3 tailors, 4 farmers, 2 gardeners, 1 ranger, 1 horsedea, 6 general agents, 2 carriers, 2 architects, 1 carpenter, 1 painter and inventor, 1 cab-driver, 15 innkeepers and coach-proprietors, 1 saddler, 1 manufacturer, 1 turner in ivory, 5 undertakers, 1 auctioneer, 1 toymaker (not Tackleton, he was a toy-merchant), 1 blacksmith, 1 wheelwright, 1 plasterer, 2 chemists, 4 money-lenders, 2 collectors, 2 (male) lodging-house keepers, 1 chandler, 1 hotel-attendant, 3 blacksmiths, 1 master sweep, 2 booksellers, 1 butcher, 1 barber, 1 bird-and-animal preserver, 1 shooting-gallery proprietor, 1 accountant, 1 trade-delegate, 2 lodge-keepers, 1 railway station, 1 errand-goer.

Now let me draw breath!

Resuming: of women, 29 domestic servants, 10 lodging-house keepers, 10 landladies and boarding-house proprietresses, 42 waiting-men's wives, sisters, and relations, 5 charwomen, 4 laundresses, 6 milliners and dressmakers, 2 workhouse officials, 2 public nurses, 1 general shopkeeper, 1 wax-work proprietress, 2 almshouse residents, 1 artiste in hair, 1 opium-dealer, 2 mill-operatives. And 43 babies and children. Also, 15 business clerks, 6 warehouse managers, 4 shopmen, 10 shopboys and apprentices, 6 working-men, 1 exhibition attendant, 8 waiters, 5 drivers, 1 stableman, 21 more domestic servants, 27 'miscellaneous' (including a crossing-sweeper and a street Arab). Also, 12 burglars, thieves, and loose women. To which stupendous catalogue—compiled by me at first-hand from the books—may be appended 10 dogs, 3 horses, and (a final personage, whose stuffed body fetched one hundred and twenty guineas as Christie, Manson, and Woods can testify) 1 raven. And all these have definite names.\*

These classified statistics prove the marvellous creative power of Dickens. Now to the names!

Imprimis, something may be said of all cognomens, whether long or short. The Chinese mandarin's wife had a name less than a single letter; it was only pronounceable by combining a grunt

\* I do not count incidental 'long-legged young men,' &c.

a sneeze! Moreover, I know a place in North Wales—no joke, this—which is a rather important mouthful. Translated: 'St.-Mary's-Church-by-the-pool-of-the-white-hazels-near-St.-Tysili-Gogo;' the easy word itself is, Llanfairpoollgwyngyllgogerboolltysiliogogo!

Now Dickens never perpetrated such a 'caution' as that, but his sportive fancy gave us Ram Chowdar Doss Azuph Al Bowlar (*Sketches*) and Don Cleophas Leandro Perez Zambullo (*Old Curiosity Shop*).

In the array of nearly a thousand names, many were adopted without thought or care—names real and ordinary, not indicative of character; while as contrastingly undeniable is it that Dickens frequently gave labour and ingenuity to the manufacture of cognomenæ. Look at the matter! Would Toots denote Micawber? Micawber, Toots? The treble tweedledee of the flute represent the deepest diapason of the organ? In the name *Micawber* there is emphatic self-assertive resonance; the echoing, springy elasticity of the 'ber' rounding the mightily-important 'caw-w-w,' as illustrative of the man as the roll of his voice or his shirt-collar.

Briefly I dispose of the ordinary names; the Joneses, the Smiths, the Browns, the Robinsons. They are but unconsidered ballast. Let Waters victimise the Tuggses at Ramsgate; Brogley put in his execution at Sol Gills'; Porter get 'swipey' (like his name) and conveyed to the police-office; Cobb be thrashed by plucky Joe Willet; Martin the groom find his match in friend Samivel; Hunt the gardener wheel Pickwick to the pound; Harris the greengrocer officiate at the footmen's 'swarry'; Lucas supply Tupman with a bandit dress; or even Dawkins the Artful manipulate Mr. Brownlow's pocket—all such names I pass over. Inventing others, Dickens exercised his naturally fine ear for sound, identifying it with sense, as he was wont to do.\* An adept at language, the volumed ponderosity of certain vowels in combination with certain consonants doubtless struck him, and I find them employed to denote character. Capacious mouthfuls, significant of personal arrogance, mental obtuseness, ultra pomposity; witness the *ul*, *aw*, *ow*, *ubb*, *cru*, *lum*, *ug*, *oun*, and *auk*, in such names as Colonel Bulder, Captain Pawkins, Sir Joseph Bowley, Sir Thomas Clubber, Honourables Crushton and Shumkey, General Choke, Colonel Wugsby, (in especial) 'Josiah Bounderby'; not to except Tugby the porter, much less Smauker the footman. The last name is wonderfully indicative of the man; first syllable drawn out and vulgarly dignified; the 'k' added shows that Bath footman in his studied attitude, drawlingly patronising as, with elevated eyebrows, he presents his snuff-box to hilarious Sam. A good name; but I know one better, the sound whereof is fitly

\* The cry of distress came through the stillness, right over the sea, like a great sorrowful flute or Æolian harp. *Out of the Season* (Reprinted Pieces).



thudsome, weighty, dully resonant, gongily funereal. Yes; pronounce the name of Dombey as off-handedly as you please, you can't throw aside its sonorous hauteur; the air quavers with its echo you have spoken in a crypt, and the groined roof repeats the heavy sound. And your utterance of the great man's great name reveals him to your awed vision; a stately procession of One—his proud potential coat-tails majestically disappearing. Dickens employed *o* and *u* in christening his heavy ordnance; but *i* and (combined with liquids) he generally reserved for light field-guns. hold my pen a moment while you sound the names.

Now, don't you recognise the contrast of Bounderby, Smauker, Dombey, with little Chillip or Dick Swiveller? Talk of the suggestiveness of sound! what volumed loquacity, vulgarity, mouthiness (the very absence of teeth represented) is there in Gamp, in Gamfield, in Bokum, in Bobster, in Bloss! whereas such a fragile name as Brittles—not a heavy letter in it—harmonises with the 'odd boy' shaking with fear what time Bill Sikes and Toby broke into his mistress's country house.

How apt, too,—remembering his high pretensions and personal degradation (poles far apart, yet connected),—is the name of Chev Slyme; that boastful 'worrier,' of unscrupulous principles, all dragged with the mud of sottishness, dismounted from his high horse and positively in pawn for a beer bill! And do we not speak of one who has recourse to paltry meannesses as a 'slimy fellow'?

Tackleton probably arises from the tiny nails used in his business of toymaking, or may spring from his morosity and disputativeness; his disposition to 'tackle' others' opinions. Heep is evidently his 'umbleness' inclined him to *creep* into everything, base crawler that he was! As to Hiram Grewgious, the name is impenetrably adamant; hard as his face, which, sturdy as you might, was no index to his feelings. The vocabulary holds no more angular name than Hiram. That angular man presented no smooth exterior; he was a *screw* in outline (not in the sense of meanness, but persistency) and the 'gious' gives an additional twist to him. And his cold, sad, repellent manner made him *gruesome*; but the unfinished story leaves his character imperfect.

What of little Miss Moucher? Sharp as a needle—not at all unlike a comical cat—what a *mouser* she proved to Littimer! Never was man more pounced upon by Scotland-yard detective, though she was only a female dwarf. But the name admits of another rendering: there was very much of the jack-pudding, the *scaramouch* about her. Observe the vagueness, simplicity, insignificance, in the very sounds of Gar-ger-y (quite a light *gargle*), Hubble, Toodle, Bib Kitt ('Miss' of Dora's picnic; not Nubbles), Tiddypot, Chivery Veck (a mere 'fleck' of a man, though, to believe the kindly creature, his speed and strength were amazing), and Wegg; and how

simplicity blends with unreserve or openness in Gills, the nautical-instrument maker.

Then Tetterby: the very sound suggests an artless little man, all disarranged and 'put about,' circumstantially disjointed; and only think of his crowding playing youngsters' wanton torture of their parent! Small marvel that he charged down upon the myriad offenders, like some domestic Rupert at a newsman's Naseby! See, too, the triviality in the name of Fagin's 'greenest' pupil (sport of all the rest), Tom Chitling. In the manufacture of all such cognomina, Dickens is liberal of his *i*'s and *t*'s; witness Tappertit, of whom anon.

Sound and sense: what dignified complacency in the name of Turveydrop—the second syllable easing the impressive first, and imparting emphasis to the third! How different the sound of Baps—that unpretentious being, who might have grown up on 'pap;' and yet he was a dancing-master too! Short and compact word; none of the swelled-chestedness of Turveydrop (as assertive as lawyer Tulkinghorn, which is a satiating mouthful in itself). How Baps stamps the textual being, even as Miggs suggests her self-satisfied smirk, or Snawley gives us an idea of unlimited nasal hypocrisy and cant!

Dickens employed dialectic vernacular. Remember the house-attendant, Mr. Klem, as lean and starved as Romeo's apothecary. His very aspect and condition are fixed in one expressive northern term—*clem*, to starve; and the disguise of K adds eccentricity and quaintness to the name. Then the operatives' orator, moutheys delegate Slackbridge. *Hard Times* is a Lancashire story. The people's word there for excessive loquacity is *jaw* or *slack*; and perhaps the *bridge* has its significance, for that trade-spouter was always offering to carry the Coketown hands to the high ground of Success.

Wicks also, the lively law-clerk, is provincially named: *wick*, alive, animated (probably from *quick*). The 'purest jackass in Cloisterham,' is dialectic; I mean Thomas Sapsea, auctioneer; *sap* designating a raw or foolish person, a 'softy.'

Two names convey ideas of difficulty, hamperedness. The first suggests a crushed and overcome condition; the second a predicament or 'fix.' And the domestic surroundings of those personages, their preoccupied wives and neglected families (remember that philanthropic monster, the famous Borrioboola Gha), sustain the comparison. Poor miserable husbands, Jellyby and Pardiggle—wriggle your best, you are jellified by home mismanagement! As to Borrioboola Gha, it merely represents outlandishness; has, indeed, no more point or purpose than the name of the old woman-servant, Tamaroo.

To denote cruelty, greed, or a half-savage state, Dickens employs the jarring and discordant 'Gr,' followed by hard or hissing



Dickens, as previously shown, gave certain uses to the heavy sounds. Typifying another class of characters, he *rejects* the *u*, *lo*, *o*, and *w*; substituting the *a*, *e*, and *i* (for light superficial personages): instance Lady Skettles, Lady Tippins, the Veneerings, Edmund Sparkler—Septimus Crisparkle I shall deal with anon—an effervescent Jinkins of 'Todgers's.' You have no harsh *g*'s here—the solitary *g* in Veneering, as in Gusher the law-clerk, being pleasantly bronchial. Characteristics considered, I think the name

Skettles was suggested by the fancy word *skit*; Tippins by *tiffin*—her ladyship generally appears at lunch or dinner; while rattled money (the *chink* of the CHINK) supplies a clue to Jinkins, whose conversational volatility and constitutional restlessness, while almost fatal to the Youngest Gentleman in Company, enlivened Todgers's.

Some names associate with calling and vocation: a bayonet to artilleryman Bagnet; war's carnage to Lieutenant Slaughter; the graveyard soil to Mould the undertaker; an article of costume to Mantalini; his unloading business to carman Tip (*p*); the fish to Captain Cuttle; school-cramming to Feeder, B.A.; ditto to pedagogue (of facts) M'Choakumchild; his 'cuteness (vulgo, *leeriness*) to Sleary of the circus; his garret poverty to poet Slum; spangles and tinfoil to Tinberry the actor; the sound of the law-court to Buzfuz; summary process of drying clothes to Mrs. Bangham the washer-woman; her shop-fowls to Mrs. Chickenstalker; his bailiff habit of leaving only the outside shell to Scaley; his seizures at creditors' instance to Tix (*tick*, credit) the broker's man; the bell to valet Tinkler.

Other names, again, are professionally high-sounding, while some serve to indicate nationality: witness the actresses Belvawney, Brayazza, Lenville, Gazingi, Snellicci; Fitz-Osborne (Sparkins), Fitz-Marshall (Jingle), and the Dorrits' chaperone Mrs. General; while of the latter, Dr. Manette, the French maid Hortense, the wine-seller Defarge, and Evrémonde's valet Gabelle. For mere display, Miss Monflathers; for identification with locality, Stephen Blackpool (Coketown being Preston, and the old Hell-shaft a veritable disused pit near Walton-le-Dale). Pruffle, the scientific gentleman's footman—recollect Pickwick's mismanaged lantern and the meteors—had a petted servant's place, was spoiled, was dressy, perhaps sported *ruffles*, or the thought suggested his name.

Concerning slang, Dickens knew it well. I think the Jew waiter's 'flyness' and ability at a 'cross' conferred the title of Barney (in *Oliver Twist*); just as 'fake' gives us Fagin, though the name may have been a real one; a burglar's phrase Crackit ('Flash Roby'), or 'morrice' and 'bolt,' to clear off, the alias Morris Bolter of Noah Claypole. As to Claypole, what is it but *mud-head*, and most expressive of that thick-skulled charity boy, as Mutanhead before mentioned?

Again: lightness, sprightliness, superficiality (remember what I said of *a* and *e* and *i*) are represented by such names as Kitterbell, La Creevy, Skimpole, Miss Lillerton (contrast its ringing sound with harsh and jarring Scr-o-o-ge), Copperfield's 'flame' Miss Larkins, the Nun's-House luminary Twinkleton; and what a sentimental sneeze, annunciative of her presence, you have in her assistant Tisher!—a regular '*tish-hoo*!' surprising the short tête-à-têtes of Edwin Drood and Rosa his betrothed.



As also in the quick and springy style of Fips—you remember his old chambers in Austin Friars, and Tom Pinch—that really jovial offhand ‘filliping’ fellow, whose impenetrability was as assumed as uncongenial. Dickens condensed Philip Pirrip to Pip: how accordant to reduce the characteristic ‘fillip’ of the little man to Fips!—a sort of all-there-ness in a nutshell. Similar simplicity and shrewdness (made the more so by syllabical compression) we see in the self-contained patentee Doyce, and the collector Pancks—contrast their sounds with Sweedlepipes or Sliderskew!—but inasmuch as Pancks, that energetic locomotive in breeches, foretold most wondrously the good fortune of Little Dorrit, the name was probably suggested by ‘hanky-panky;’ just as London dash and pertness are innate in Swidger (how the *switch* whistles through the air!), the merry lodge-keeper, whose ‘Exactly-as-I-say-myself’ indorsing others’ opinions adds to his own importance.

The names of another class effectively suggest cruelty, injustice, stealthiness, effrontery, rapacity, craft—connected qualities. How did Fang bully Mr. Brownlow! Had not Sampson Brass the unscrupulous audacity of a shark (remember his profession)? How the iron heel of resurrectionist Cruncher grinds the churchyard mould (he who would not be prayed for or permit his wife to ‘flop’)! The adroit stony-hearted old scoundrel Flintwinch unites the leverage in business matters, of a winch and the hardness of a flint itself. Even Betsy Trotwood said she found something ‘murdering’ in the name of oppressive inflexible Murdstone (proof that the author has considered it). Marwood, otherwise ‘good Mrs. Brown,’ is evil from first to last, the despicable, dirty, demoniacal child-stripper. Monks (real name Edward Leeford, brother to Oliver Twist) is secret and mysterious; Carker the manager has a name with not a soft or sweet sound in it, as repulsive as Scrooge or Kags, the latter of which, denoting a convict, probably sprang from the thieves’ term ‘lag;’ while Isaac List, insinuating cock-eyed gambler, a terror to Nell and a snare to her grandsire, is the epitome of stealth and noiseless craft—a rascal who might have approached his victims in *list* slippers! How an honest reader burns to clutch him by the throat when he incites the doting grandfather to deprive our own dear darling child of her last coin! I confess to many muttered oaths and internal imprecations thereat, not without tears for *her*.

Let a thought too be given to the significance of Barnaby Rudge, the raven Grip, whose cultivation of the vulgar tongue rather strengthened by his temporary confinement in Newgate. What power, what tenacity, the name implies! and how the feathered jocular devil (I take his *own* word for his Satanship) holds fast to everything he seizes, be it a bauble or buried treasure, an acquired speech or a human sinew! No mistake about *him*; and really, allowing for his being a bird, I think there was some blood-relationship between

Grip the devil and that other imp, Daniel Quilp, though they knew not each other! But I hasten to deal with the *special* names, and may fitly open with the dwarf.

By reference to incidental occurrences and individual peculiarities, to the acts, feelings, qualifications of the personages themselves, will I support my theory of their names; and this is, I take it, fair play: Charles Dickens as author becoming my witness and exponent.

Sacrificing style to space, I commence my examination of the special names with—Quilp. The word 'quilt' (*v.a.*) is used semi-humorously, to signify the inflicting of punishment: 'I'll give you a quilting! I'll quilt you!' The diabolical dwarf delighted in annoying others; he was a malicious monster who revelled in teasing, torturing, punishing everybody he could. His tantalising devilry to his wife and Mrs. Jiniwin; his enjoyment of the woes of Sampson Brass, when he compelled that 'worthy' to drink steaming spirit; his plot against honest Kit, and the way in which he stabbed Kit's eel; his wild dance round the chained and infuriated dog; his thrashings of that upside-down young cure, Tom Scott—all come to mind. Cruel, spiteful, the scheming unsightly wretch strove to find pleasure in punishing and 'quilting' all about him. But *quilt* itself might have been misunderstood for the noun substantive, an ordinary bed-covering. Dickens makes Quilp relish his atrocities; and Dickens knew the unctuousness of the letter *p*, as in the term *gulp*. How one seems to smack the lips after it! So by sinking the *t* in 'quilt'—to punish, to beat—and substituting *p*, we have Quilp in full, and the very smack of the little monster's lips preserved in sound.

It was imperative that Sam Weller's name should begin with *W*, as a set-off against the meditated cockneyisms. How could old Tony have played upon the *V* (in the great trial-scene) had it not? The *W* was indicative, and Sam and his father constantly ring the changes upon it. As to the other letters, any would have sufficed; and yet perhaps even the whole word Weller is significant. As thus: Sam never got worsted but once (when Job Trotter 'sold' him over the boarding-school affair); and so, while some Londoners are good at repartee or contrivance, and others better, the immortal Sam was (sinking all grammar) best or Weller—yea, *Wellest*, if you will! Such an expressive but perverted absurdity was very much in the way of the then young author, brimful of fun and humour, and intent on making Sam the character next to Mr. Pickwick.

Krook of the marine-stores: victim of spontaneous combustion; voice like a raven, with dash of the crow; chuckled deep down in his throat after a hard and successful bargain. Hear, also, his fatal liquor gurgling as he greedily swallows it, his crooked old throat offering cartilaginous impedimenta. Altogether, not unlike the rattle



in the Chatham clothes-dealer's windpipe—that horrible *goroo!*—who fleeced poor David. Well, voice, liquor, swallow all combine surely they attest themselves and prove the man in—Krook!—without residuary evidences of raven, crow, and *gurgle*.

The name Micawber was unquestionably suggested by the important, showy, self-asserting *macaw*. His voice had no scree but 'a roll in it.' Very much of the bird's pretentiousness in Micawber's get-up: impressive shirt-collars, consequential eye-glass chest thrown out; not to mention special occasions, as when prepared to emigrate, and walked the deck clad nautically, with mien to match. Dickens was a master of sounds; remember the condensation of Philip Pirrip into Pip—*i*'s preserved, and *p*'s precipitated by a chemical process of his own.

I get at the rosy old undertaker, Mr. Omer, thus: behind his shop-counter, yard-stick in hand, measuring funeral cloth; essential transitional thought (from length to quantity)—omer, a Hebrew measure. In such transitions Dickens indulged; instances, Steerforth, Rudderford, Smike, Pyke, Westlock, Northkey; even cucumber may be derived from King Jeremiah, or Solomon from Homer.\*

Pecksniff is great—his selfish inquisitiveness, his aptitude 'stick his beak' into what he scented. How he *pecked* everybody! Old Martin even as a stranger; simple, lovable Tom Pinch; Mr. Todgers' good liquor, when he got 'chronically drunk;' in fact went on pecking until the Anglo-Bengalee pecked *him*. As to *sniff*, remember how he dismissed faithful Tom with upturned eye and nasal forgiveness for uninflicted injuries; how he *sniffed* about Baal, Baal! and Calf, calf! and purity; nor forget his address to Mary Graham. *Pecking?* Didn't he peck young Martin's design on the grammar-school? *Sniffing?* The (literally) 'finished' hypocrite didn't forget his part when he lay under wrathful old Martin's warning-stick even! I repeat it; the name is as great as the man; little; it just *fits him like a skin*.

\* *Omeros* (backwards), *soremo*, *solemo*, *Solomon*.

# BELGRAVIA

MAY 1873

## STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET,' ETC.

### Book the Second.

#### CHAPTER VII.

'The good explore,  
For peace, those realms where guilt can never soar;  
The proud, the wayward, who have fix'd below  
Their joy, and find this earth enough for woe,  
Lose in that one their all—perchance a mite—  
But who in patience parts with all delight?'

MRS. CHEVENIX, descending to her drawing-room in state,—after the recuperative effects of a leisurely breakfast in bed, and a gradual and easy toilet; her dress prepared for the reception of morning callers; her complexion refreshed with violet powder,—was horrified at finding her niece prostrate on the threshold of the back drawing-room. But when Mrs. Chevenix and her maid had administered the usual remedies, with a good deal of rushing to and fro, and the girl's haggard eyes reopened on the outer world, her first care was to assure them that the fainting fit was of no importance. She had been a little over-fatigued last night, that was all.

'I can't imagine what made you get up so preposterously early this morning, child,' said Mrs. Chevenix rather impatiently, 'instead of trying to recruit your strength, as any sensible young woman would have done. How can you expect your complexion to last, if you go on in this way? You are as dark under the eyes as if you had not slept an hour for the last fortnight. Good looks are very well in their way, Elizabeth; but they won't stand such treatment as this. Go up to your room and lie down for an hour or two, and let Mason give you one of my globules.'



Elizabeth shrugged her shoulders impatiently: globules for the cure of her disease! Infinitesimal doses for the healing of that great agony! How foolish a thing this second childishness of comfortable emotionless middle age is; this fools' paradise of pet poodles and homœopathy; this empty senile existence, which remains for some men and women, when feeling and passion are dead and gone!

'You know I don't believe in homœopathic medicines,' she said, turning her tired head aside upon the pillow of the sofa where she had laid her, with a look of utter weariness and disgust; 'or in any other medicines, indeed. I was never ill in my life, that I can remember, and I am not ill now. Let me lie here; I feel as if I could never get up again as long as I live.'

'A natural consequence of over-excitement,' said Mrs. Chevenix. 'Shut the folding-doors, Mason, in case any one should call; and bring Miss Luttrell the *couvre-pied* from the sofa in my bedroom. You shall have a mutton-chop and a pint of Moselle for your luncheon, Lizzie; and if Lord Paulyn should come before luncheon I sha'n't allow him to see you.'

'Lord Paulyn!' cried the girl, with a shiver; 'let me never hear his name again as long as I live. He has broken my heart.'

Mrs. Chevenix received this wild assertion with the stony stare of bewilderment.

'My dearest Lizzie, what are you dreaming of?' she exclaimed, pleased to think that Mason had departed, in quest of the *couvre-pied* before this strange utterance. 'I am sure that poor young man is perfectly devoted to you.'

'Who wants his devotion?' cried Elizabeth impatiently. 'Has he ever been anything but a torment to me? O, yes, I know what you are going to say,' interrupting aunt Chevenix's half-uttered exclamation. 'In that case, why did I encourage his attentions? I did so, I hardly knew that I was encouraging them. It was rather pleasant to feel that other people thought a great deal more of me on account of his silly infatuation; and he is not the kind of man who would ever be much the worse for any disappointment in that way. It would be too preposterous to suppose that he had a heart capable of feeling deeply about anything except his race-horses.'

This was said half listlessly, yet with an air which implied that the speaker was trying to justify herself, and was half doubtful of the force of her own reasoning.

'No heart!' ejaculated Mrs. Chevenix indignantly; 'why, I do believe that young man is all heart. I'm sure the warmth of his attachment to you is a very strong proof of it. No heart, indeed. If you had spoken of your tall curate now, with his rigid puritanical expression of countenance (just the look of an iconoclast—what's his name—a man who would chip the noses of the saints on the carved

doors of a cathedral—I should think), if you had talked of *his* having no heart, I might have agreed with you.'

'Aunt Chevenix,' said Elizabeth, starting up from her pillow, 'if you ever dare to say one word in disparagement of Malcolm Forde, I shall hate you. I am almost tempted to hate you as it is, for being at the root of all my misery. Don't put your finger upon an open wound. You have no occasion to run him down now; he is nothing more to me. He came here this morning, not an hour ago, to give me up. I meant to tell you nothing about this; but you would have found it out somehow, I daresay, before long, and it is just as well you should know at once. He came to give me up, of his own accord. Our dream of happiness was very short, was it not? and he has ended it of his own free will. It would hardly have seemed so strange if I had been tempted away from him; for, so far as the offer of a brilliant position in this world can tempt a penniless parson's daughter, I have been tempted. Yet Heaven knows my faith never wavered for a moment. But he had heard something about Lord Paulyn and me; had seen some silly paragraph in a newspaper, and came to give me up. Even if I had been inclined to exculpate myself, he gave me no opportunity; he would hardly let me speak. And it was not for me to supplicate for a hearing; so I let him go, without an effort to detain him, almost as coldly as he renounced me.'

'And you acted like a woman of spirit in so doing,' cried Mrs. Chevenix triumphantly; indeed, nothing could be more delightful to her than this intelligence. 'Sue to him, indeed—exculpate yourself to him!—that would be rather too much. I congratulate you, my dear girl, upon having released yourself from a most unfortunate and mistaken engagement.'

'It may have been all that,' said the girl, shrinking from her aunt's soothing caress with a shiver; 'but, unluckily, I loved the man. "I loved you once,"' she repeated dreamily, going back to her interview with Malcolm Forde. 'O God, that I should live to hear him say that! "I loved you once."'

'My dearest child, it was not in human nature that such an engagement as that could endure. You, handsome, accomplished, admired, with peculiar opportunities of social success; this with a swelling pride in that dainty little establishment in Eaton-place—south, and in herself as the sole source of these opportunities. 'He, an obscure provincial curate; a man who, entering the Church somewhat late in life, has actually started at a disadvantage; not even a particularly agreeable or good-looking person; and I feel sure that when reason and experience have come to your aid, Lizzie, you will confess the baselessness of your infatuation.'

'When experience has made me a hard, worldly old woman, like Lady Paulyn, I may begin to see things in that light,' said Eliza-



both bitterly; 'but please don't talk to me any more about Forde. Respect his name as you would if he were dead. He was dead,' she repeated. 'Could I be any more unhappy were I lying in his grave?'

'Do not be afraid that I shall talk of the man,' exclaimed Chevenix indignantly. 'I am too much disgusted with him. To choose the very time in which his prospects began to improve as I conclude this uncle has left him something—to throw away! However, I thank Providence that your future may be far more brilliant than any position which *he* could offer you, at present.'

Elizabeth said nothing; but sat with fixed eyes, staring into space. Could it be that he was indeed dead to her; that he would not come back? O, surely not. That parting could not be so final. It was not possible that he could pluck her from his heart so completely. She, who on her side felt as if she were verily a part of him, a mere subordinate being that could have no existence without him. She felt all this in spite of her season of independent pleasure. In spite of these last few months in which he had had no share in her life. Her lower instincts had been gratified by those vain dissipations; the nobler half of her being belonged to him, and he himself apart from all the world besides.

'He will come back to me,' she said to herself. 'If I had only thought that, I could never have let him go. I should have knelt at his feet, thrown myself between him and the door, and begged him as a shipwrecked sailor clings to a floating spar, rather than let him leave me for ever.'

Buoyed up by this belief, Elizabeth supported her countenance with a tolerable show of calm; was even able to go to a party that evening—a dinner in Montague-square—at which there was no fear of meeting Lord Paulyng; looked very lovely, in spite of her pallor, if not her best; sang, and talked, and laughed with that low silent laugh which was one of her fascinations; and together delighted Mrs. Chevenix, who had expected to see him stricken down utterly for a day or two.

'He will come back to me,' the girl was saying to herself during the evening. 'There will be a letter, perhaps, waiting for me when we go home.'

All that day she had been expecting his return, or at least some tender remorseful letter; but the day had passed and he had made no sign. Then she told herself that his anger could not cool all at once; he had been very angry, no doubt, though he bore himself like a rock. Not all at once could he discover that it was essential she was to his life.

How eager she was for the return to Eaton-place! he had more than usually wearisome seemed that endless small-talk about the new shows and picture galleries, and opera singers and classical

She fancied how the letter would be handed to her by her aunt's pompous serving-man; the dear letter with its superscription in that noble hand. How she would snatch it from the salver, and run up to her own room to devour its contents in happy solitude! She could almost fancy how it would begin:

'My dearest,—Forgive me!'

They were at home at last; but the serving-man, who looked sleepy, brought her no salver.

'Any letters, Plomber?' she asked, with well-assumed carelessness.

'No, ma'am.'

'Did you expect anything particular?' Mrs. Chevenix inquired.

'No; only I thought there might have been one from—from Gerty or Di.'

'What can people at Hawleigh have to write about?' said her aunt contemptuously.

The girl went straight to her room, heart-sick.

'He will come back to me to-morrow,' she said.

To-morrow came, but brought no tidings of Malcolm Forde—a dreary day, the longest Elizabeth ever remembered in her life—which had contained many days that were dull enough and blank enough in all conscience.

Lord Paulyn came, as he had come on the previous afternoon; but he was not allowed to see Miss Luttrell. She was ill, Mrs. Chevenix told him, really prostrate; 'such a sensitive nature, dear Lord Paulyn, so much imagination. I'm afraid I must take her down to Brighton for change of air.'

The Viscount departed unwillingly, displeased at this interruption of his smaller pleasures, the trifling talk and tea-drinking, in the hour he had been wont of old to devote to more masculine diversions—horsey talk at a horsey club, or a lounge at Tattersall's.

But although he was thus banished by the diplomatic matron, Elizabeth was not really ill. She was only white and wan, with blank tearless eyes, the living image of despair. Not in a condition to be seen by a young nobleman who aspired to decorate her brow with a coronet. A lifeless creature, whose tenure of happiness hung on a thread. Would he come or write? Would he forgive her, and take her back to his heart?

'Why did I ever come to London?' she asked herself, with a curious wonder at her own folly.

The cup of pleasure, being drained to the dregs, had left an after flavour of exceeding bitterness. She looked back to those sweet peaceful days at Hawleigh, to that spring-time of life and love, when her heart had been exultant with a girl's triumph in her first conquest, and remembered how averse Malcolm Forde had been to the



idea of this visit. And for such empty trifles, for the vapid pleasure of a London season, a few balls, a few picnics—at best only the Hawleigh dances and picnics upon a larger scale—she had jeopardised that dearest treasure; for so childish a vanity as seeing the unknown world of good society, she had imperilled and lost the confidence of her lover!

Other to-morrows came and faded, and still there was no sign of relenting on the part of Malcolm Forde. And still the girl's white face and absent manner forbade the admission of visitors. Lord Paulyn was impatient, sullen even, with a sense of injury, as if he had been an accepted lover unduly kept at bay. Upon one particular afternoon, feeling his disappointment acutely—he had brought a fresh bouquet of stephanotis and maiden-hair every afternoon, waxen blossoms which had bloomed and languished unheeded in Elizabeth's dull eyes—he gave free utterance to his vexation, and a communicative mood poured his griefs into the maternal bosom of Mrs. Chevenix. It was uncommonly hard, he urged, that after he had put up with and gone through—the amount of nonsense he had stood from Miss Luttrell—she should throw him over the bridge for a parson fellow like that man at Hawleigh.

'My dear Lord Paulyn,' replied Mrs. Chevenix, with a confidential air, bending her head a little nearer to the young man, as he sat *à cheval* on his favourite *pouf*, rocking backwards and forwards drearily, and by that gracious movement besprinkling him lightly with *poudre de Maréchal*, 'that engagement is one which I have a secret conviction cannot be enduring. If I had not entertained such an opinion, I should never have encouraged—I will go farther, and say would never have sanctioned—your frequent presence in this house. No,' this with a lofty air, as of sublimest virtue, 'I have too much regard for what is due to myself, as well as to you. I am no slave of rank or wealth. If I did not think that you were eminently suited to my niece, and Mr. Forde as eminently unsuited to her, should not have lent my support to an intimacy which could have but one result. Elizabeth is a girl whom to know is to love.'

'I'm not sure about that,' said the young man, not deeply moved by this solemn address. 'She's rather a queer girl, take her altogether; fools a man to the top of his bent one day, and snubs him the next; gives herself no end of airs, as if the world and everybody in it had been made to order for her. But she's the handsomest woman in London, and she has a peculiar way of her own that no man can stand against. I hadn't known her a fortnight before she made up my mind I'd marry her. But I didn't go to work rashly for all that; I left Hawleigh without committing myself; gave myself time to find out if it was a serious case with me.'

Mrs. Chevenix gave a little impatient sigh.

'If you had been a shade less cautious, and had spoken out

once, you might have prevented this foolish affair with Mr. Forde,' she said.

'Yes, but I pride myself upon knowing what I'm about—not putting my horse at a fence unless I know what's on the other side of it. And the worst of this Forde business is, that she's desperately fond of him, has owned as much to me, and gloried in owning it.'

'A girl's delusion,' said Mrs. Chevenix soothingly; 'the romance of an hour, which will vanish like a summer cloud when the charm of novelty is gone. She has some foolish exalted idea of Mr. Forde's character, a half-religious hallucination that is not likely to last very long.'

'I hope not,' replied the Viscount in his matter-of-fact way. 'At any rate, I mean to stand my ground; only it's rather wearing for a man's temper. I wanted the whole business settled and done with by the end of this season. I've all manner of engagements for my yachts and stable. I must be at Goodwood at the end of this month, and I've a sailing-match at Havre the first week in August; then come German steeplechases. I've wasted more time than I ever wasted in my life before upon this affair.'

'Be assured of my entire sympathy,' murmured Mrs. Chevenix.

'O, yes, of course, I know you are all there,' answered the hapless lover carelessly. 'I've known all along you'd be on my side. It isn't likely you'd back that plater,' by which contemptuous epithet he described his rival. 'But I should like to see the wind-up of this engagement, or,' almost savagely, 'I should like to get Elizabeth Luttrell out of my head, and be my own man again.'

Mrs. Chevenix shuddered. This hint of a sudden wrench, a violent effort to emancipate himself, on the part of the Viscount, filled her soul with consternation.

'I'm doing very wrong,' she exclaimed, with a sudden gush of friendship. 'It is a breach of confidence for which I shall hardly be able to forgive myself, but I can't bear to see you suffer and to withhold knowledge that might seem consolatory. I have reason to believe that the engagement between my niece and Mr. Forde is at an end.'

'What!' cried Reginald Paulyn; 'she has thrown him off. She has served him as she serves everybody else, blown hot one day and cold the next.'

'I have reason to believe that they have quarrelled,' Mrs. Chevenix said mysteriously.

'What, has she seen him lately?'

'She has; and since I have gone so far,—on the impulse of the moment, prompted only by my sympathy with your depth of feeling,—I must go still farther. The quarrel was about you. Mr. Forde had seen some paragraph associating your names—a marriage in high life—something absurd of that kind.'



'Yes, I know; Cinqmars showed me the newspaper. It was doing, I fancy. Mrs. Cinqmars has taken me under her wing, and no doubt inspired the paragraph, with the notion that it might bring matters to a crisis.'

'It has produced a crisis,' said Mrs. Chevenix solemnly, 'and very painful one for Elizabeth. The poor girl is utterly crushed.'

'She was so fond of that beggar,' muttered Lord Paulyn gloomily.

'Perhaps not so much on that account as for the humiliation involved in such an idea. To be accused of having played fast and loose, of having encouraged your attentions while she was engaged to him. And now, between you both, she finds herself abandoned standing alone in the world, perhaps the mark for slander.'

'Abandoned! standing alone!' cried Lord Paulyn, starting from his low chair as if he would have rushed off at once in quest of a marriage license. 'Why, she must know that I am ready to marry her to-morrow!'

This was just the point at which Mrs. Chevenix could afford to leave him.

'My dear young friend,' she exclaimed, 'moderate your feelings. I entreat. She is not a girl to be taken by storm. Let her recover from the shock she has received; then, while her heart is still so wounded, weary with a sense of its own emptiness, then urge your suit once more, and I have little doubt that you will conquer; though the contrast between your generous all-confiding affection and Mr. Forde's jealous tyranny will awaken the purest and truest emotions of her heart.'

This was a more exalted style of language than Reginald Paulyn cared about—a kind of thing which, in his own simple and forceful vocabulary, he denominated 'humbug'—but the main fact was pleasing to him. Elizabeth had dismissed, or had been deserted by, her plighted lover. The ground was cleared for himself.

## CHAPTER VIII.

'She weeps alone for pleasures not to be;  
Sorely she wept until the night came on,  
And then, instead of love, O misery!  
She brooded o'er the luxury alone:  
His image in the dusk she seem'd to see,  
And to the silence made a gentle moan,  
Spreading her perfect arms upon the air,  
And on her couch low murmuring, "Where? O where?"'

No flicker of colour brightened the pallid cheeks, no ray of the accustomed light shone in the dull eyes, and yet Elizabeth was not ill. She was only intensely miserable.

'I only wish I were ill,' she said impatiently, when her

urged the necessity of medical advice, change of air—some speedy means by which blanched cheeks and heavy eyes might be cured. 'For in that case there might be some hope that I should die. But I am not ill; I don't believe my pulse beats half-a-dozen times more in a minute since Malcolm Forde renounced me. I eat and drink, and sleep even, more or less. There are a good many hours in every night in which I lie awake staring at the wall; but before the maid comes to get my bath ready, I do manage to sleep, somehow. And I dream that Malcolm and I are happy, walking on the common just beyond our house at Hawleigh. I never dream of our quarrel; only that I am with him, and utterly happy. I think the pain of waking from one of those lying dreams, and finding that it is only a dream, is sharper agony than the worst vision of his unkindness with which sleep could torture me. To dream that he is all my own, to feel the warm grasp of his hand locked in mine, and to wake and remember that I have lost him—yes, that is misery.'

Whereupon Mrs. Chevenix would dilate upon the childishness of such regrets, and would set forth the numerous deprivations which her niece would have had to endure as Mr. Forde's wife; how she could never have kept her carriage, or at best only a pony-chaise or one-horse wagonette, the hollowest mockery or phantasm of a carriage, infinitely worse than none, as implying the desire for an equipage without the ability to maintain one—a thing that would be spoken of timorously as a 'conveyance'; how, as a clergyman's wife, she could not hope to be on a level with the county families; how all her natural aspirations for 'style' and 'society' would be nipped in the bud; while such means as her husband could command would be devoted to the relief of tiresome old women, and the maintenance of an expensive choir. From this dreary picture Mrs. Chevenix branched off to Lord Paulyn, his generosity, his self-abnegation, his chivalry, his thousand virtues, and his three country seats.

'If I could be talked into marrying a man I don't care a straw about, while I love another with all my heart and soul, your eloquence might ultimately unite me to Lord Paulyn,' Elizabeth said, with a sneer; 'but I am not quite weak enough for that. I daresay it sounds very ungrateful, after all the money you have spent upon me and all the trouble you have taken about me; but O, aunt Chevenix, how I wish I had never come to London! The beginning of my visit to you was the beginning of my quarrel with Malcolm. How could I slight a wish of his! I loved him for a long year before I won him, and I only kept his love a few short weeks. Was there ever such folly since the world began?'

Mrs. Chevenix urged Brighton as the universal healer of cockney griefs. What Londoner does not believe in the curative powers of Brighton for all ailments of the mind and body? The pleasant



treadmill tramp up and down the King's-road, interchanging affectionate greetings with people you met yesterday in Bond-street the agreeable monotony of the pier; the pervading flavour of London and sea air. Mrs. Chevenix declared that in that cheerful atmosphere Elizabeth would forget her griefs.

'It is not the season for Brighton, I admit,' she confessed reluctantly, 'but there are always plenty of nice people there in the Goodwood week; or we might even stay at Chichester, if you preferred it.'

'You are very good to trouble yourself so much about me,' said Elizabeth, trying to be grateful, yet with an air of extreme weariness; 'but I assure you there is nothing the matter—nothing but a sorrow that must wear itself out somehow—as all sorrows do, suppose, when people are young and strong as I am, and not of the stuff that grief can destroy. The best place for me is home. I shall not give any one trouble there. I can just live my own life; visit the poor, perhaps, a little again,' with a faint choking sob; 'and teach in the Sunday school, and no one will take any notice of me. I am not at all fit for society. I don't hear what people are saying and I am always in danger of answering at random; and I don't want people to talk about the worm in the bud, or to sit like Patience on a monument, and all that kind of thing. Let me take my sorrow home to Hawleigh, auntie, and dig a decent grave for it there.'

'Go back to Hawleigh! Yes; to meet that man again, I suppose, and begin over again.'

'No fear of that. I had a letter from Gertrude this morning. I'll read you what she says about him, if you like.'

She took out a closely-written letter; that wondrous composition, a lady's letter, utterly devoid of intelligence likely to interest the human mind, yet crossed and bracketed and interpolated, as if brimming over with matter.

'We have all been surprised by Mr. Forde's sudden desertion of Hawleigh, and can only imagine that things are ended between you and him; and that you have returned to your old idea about Lord Paulyn. I know auntie had set her heart upon that match and I never thought your engagement to Mr. Forde would survive your visit to Eaton-place.'

'Other people could see my peril,' said Elizabeth bitterly, she folded the letter. 'It was only I who was blind.'

'Other people are blessed with common sense, and would naturally foresee the termination of so ill-advised an engagement,' Mrs. Chevenix replied sharply. She was fast losing patience with the favourite niece of hers, who had fortune at her feet, and spurned it. 'The day will come when you will repent this folly,' she said 'at a time when it may be too late to retrace your steps. Even

Lord Paulyn's infatuation will not last for ever; you have trifled with him too long already.'

'Trifled with him!' echoed Elizabeth scornfully; 'I have only one wish about him,—that I may never see his face again.'

Mrs. Cinqmars called in Eaton-place a day or two after the private theatricals, and was full of anxiety about her sweet Elizabeth; entreating to be allowed to see her, if only for a few minutes. But this privilege Miss Luttrell refused obstinately.

'I detest the whole set, and will never see any of them again,' she said fretfully, when her aunt brought her that lady's message. Nor did Mrs. Chevenix press the point; she did not care to expose her niece's faded countenance to the sharp eyes of Mrs. Cinqmars. She did not want the Rancho world to know that Elizabeth had been deserted by her lover, and had taken that desertion so deeply to heart.

After about a week of anxiety, during which she had hoped every day to see the girl's dull face brighten, and her spirits revive with the natural elasticity of youth, Mrs. Chevenix lost heart; and hearing of some particular friends who were just going to Torquay, she consented to Elizabeth's return under their wing. They would take her to Exeter, where her father could meet her on the arrival of the down train; so that the proprieties should be in no manner outraged by her journey. The girl seemed so utterly broken down, that it was hopeless to expect her speedy revival. All Mrs. Chevenix's ambitious dreams must be held in suspense till next year; unless destiny interposed in some beneficent manner during the hunting season, when Lord Paulyn might reappear at the Vicarage, and find this wretched girl cured of her folly.

So Elizabeth had her wish, and went home; went home to bury her misery in the dull quiet of the old life, glad to be released from that brighter world which had now become odious to her. It is possible that some lurking hope, some expectation she would scarcely confess to herself, was at the root of her eager desire for that homeward journey.

She went over that brief sentence in Gertrude's letter again and again: 'they had been surprised by Mr. Forde's sudden desertion of Hawleigh.' What did that mean? Had he returned to his duties and announced the approaching termination of them? or was the 'desertion' of which her sister wrote an accomplished fact? Had he bidden them farewell, and departed to some new field of usefulness? Had he shifted the scene of that laborious career which Mother Church reserves for her children?

'I shall be enlightened to-night,' she said to herself, as she bade her aunt good-bye at Paddington, in the brilliant summer noon-tide; the departure platform crowded with holiday travellers, people



who appeared to be serene in a fixed belief that this life was intended for the pursuit of frivolous pleasures.

She sat in the corner of the railway-carriage, with half-closed eyes, during the greater part of the journey, pretending to be asleep as a means of escaping the benevolent officiousness of her aunt's particular friends; but she was conscious of every feature in the landscape that flashed past the window, and the journey seemed an almost intolerable length to her weary spirit. Her father's mild face peering in at the window, when the train entered Exeter's stately terminus, struck her with an emotion that was almost pain. She had thought of him so little during the last few months; had lived her own life—a life of pleasure and vanity—with so supreme a selfishness. She clung to him for a moment, as he kissed her with a remorseful tenderness.

'Why, Lizzie, my dear, how ill you look!' he said, startled by the settled pallor of the face, that looked at him with such a new tenderness; 'Maria told me nothing in her last letter.'

'There was nothing to tell, papa,' said Elizabeth; 'I am not ill, only very tired.'

'That foolish theatrical performance, I'm afraid, my love; or—or—' looking at her anxiously, 'you may have been unhappy about something—some misunderstanding. I have seen Forde.'

They were alone together in a deserted waiting-room; the South Devon train having whisked Mrs. Chevenix's particular friends off to Torquay.

'Then you know all, papa,' with a feeble attempt to appear supremely indifferent; 'that he and I did not suit each other, and have agreed to differ, as some one says somewhere.'

'Something to that effect, my dear. But Forde fully exonerates you. He took all the blame upon himself.'

'Very generous,' with her old scornful laugh; 'but the usual thing in such cases, I believe. Are you very angry with me for coming back to you in this forlorn condition?'

'Angry with you, my love! How can you imagine such a thing? Forde is an excellent fellow, but could never have been a good match for you. I am not the kind of man to interfere with my children's wishes; but your aunt had inspired me with more ambitious ideas about you, and I confess I was disappointed.'

'Then you may be quite happy, papa; Mr. Forde and I have parted for ever.'

"He turn'd him right and round about,  
Upon the Irish shore;  
And gae his bridle-reins a shake,  
With adieu for ever more, my dear,  
With adieu for ever more!"

## CHAPTER IX.

'Can we, whose souls are lighted  
With wisdom from on high,  
Can we to men benighted  
The lamp of life deny?  
Salvation! O salvation!  
The joyful sound proclaim,  
Till each remotest nation  
Has learnt Messiah's name.'

It was a dismal coming home after all the glories of that London season. There was a suppressed triumph in Gertrude's manner, which Elizabeth felt, but could hardly take objection to. Diana was indifferent, shrugged her shoulders, and observed that Mrs. Chevenix's London seasons were not astounding in their results. 'We are like Somebody and his men,' she said; 'we all ride up the hill, and then ride down again.' The beauty of the family had not endeared herself infinitely to these elder sisters. Blanche clung about her tenderly, and sighed, and mutely sympathised, not daring to speak of her sister's woes; but evidently brimming over with compassion. The caresses and unspoken compassion were a great deal more tiresome to Elizabeth than the spiteful exultation of the elders.

'I almost wish I had come back engaged to Lord Paulyn,' she said to herself. 'It would be better to marry a man one despised than to put up with this kind of thing.'

Mr. Forde's name was evidently tabooed in the domestic circle, as a delicate attention to herself; but she had made her father tell her all he knew about her lost lover during the journey from Exeter.

'Yes, my dear, he is going to put his old idea into execution; he is going to the South Sea Islands as a missionary. It is a kind of craze of his, poor fellow; and upon my word, Lizzie, I think you are happily released from your engagement to a man with such a notion. Rely upon it, the old idea would have got the better of him sooner or later, however comfortably settled he might have been in England; and he would have wanted to drag you off to some savage country with him.'

'Very likely,' said Elizabeth, with a little sigh.

She was thinking what happiness it would have seemed to her to have gone with him; to have shared his perils, to have lightened his labours, to have been verily the other half of his mind and soul. What matter how desolate the region so long as they two had been together; to have watched his slumbers in those long silent nights, with no sound save the distant cry of some beast of prey; to have died even, clasped to his breast, beneath a rain of poisoned arrows; or done to death by a savage's stone hatchet!

'When does he go?' she asked presently.



'Immediately. He has bidden us all good-bye. He preaches his farewell sermon in St. Clement's to-morrow evening.'

Her heart gave a wild leap at this. She would hear his voice once more. He would see her sitting in her accustomed corner in the old square pew below the pulpit—could not help seeing her all through his sermon; who could tell if the sight of her face might not melt him?

'But his heart is made of stone,' she thought, 'or it would have softened towards me before this. He has only a heart for the heathen; not for common human sorrows, not for the mute agonies of a love like mine.'

'I suppose if I had any proper pride, I should not go to hear him preach to-morrow night,' she said to herself; 'but I think my stock of pride was exhausted the day he came to me in Eaton-place. If that interview were to come over again, I would grovel in the dust at his feet. What is there that I would not do to win him back?'

Home hardly seemed such a peaceful shelter as she had fancied it when she turned with disgust from the frivolities of Eaton-place. It would have been very well without her sisters; but she had an uncomfortable consciousness that six watchful eyes were upon her, and that three active minds were occupied in the consideration of her affairs. She had not even the comfort of solitude in the night season, for her tower was shared by Blanche, and she could not sigh or sob in her sleep without arousing that sympathetic young person, who was unhappily a light sleeper. She heard soothing murmurs of 'poor Lizzie,' 'poor darling,' amidst her fitful slumber; and turned angrily upon her pillow, with her face to the wall, like king David in the day of his sorrow.

She looked desperately ill next morning, when the July sun shone into the tower chamber, and the skylark sent up his orisons from his wicker cage outside the arched casement. The excitement of her return, vague hopes that lightened her despair, had brightened her face with a faint semblance of the old brightness yesterday evening; but to-day Blanche beheld the wreck that one season's joys and sorrows had made of her sister.

'I'll bring you your breakfast, darling,' she said, in her caressing way. 'Of course you won't think of going to church to-day.'

'Did you ever know me stop away from church on a Sunday morning?' Elizabeth answered impatiently; 'that is one of the penalties of our position.'

'But if you are really ill, darling.'

'I am not really ill; there is nothing the matter with me. You needn't stare at me in that disconsolate way. I can't help it if I am pale; a London season is not calculated to improve one's complexion. You can send me up a cup of tea presently, if you like; I always had an early cup of tea in London. And if you'll be kind enough to go

on dressing and take no notice of me, I may be able to get half-an-hour's sleep.

That half-hour's sleep seemed to have done a good deal for Elizabeth; for when she came down-stairs, after a cold bath and a careful toilet, when the bells began to ring gaily out from the ponderous square tower of St. Clement's, she was looking something like her old self. She had put on her prettiest bonnet, and had dressed herself in white muslin; the dress Malcolm had always praised. If the charm of a bonnet or a dress could only touch his heart, and keep him from cocoa-nut groves, and savage women in scanty raiment, and other horrors!

What a strange thing it seemed to hear his voice once more in the gray old church!—to hear it and to know that this day was the last upon which she could ever hope to hear it; for beyond that dismal mission who would dare to look? She tried to realise the fact of his speedy departure, but it was difficult. His presence in the old familiar church was such a natural thing—a fact that had been going on all her life, it seemed to her; for she could hardly bring herself to look behind those days, to the blank era of curates who counted for nothing in her existence. And the church would be there still, a dreary immutability; the voice of a stranger echoing along the same aisle, and she compelled to sit and listen: while her miserable lonely soul tried to follow that beloved wanderer across unknown seas, to a land that was more strange than a fairy tale.

His presence there to-day, considered in the light of that near future, had a phantasmal aspect, as if the spirit of the newly-dead had been with them for a brief space, looking at them with kind and mournful eyes. Was he not, like the dead, called away to a land distant and inaccessible as the regions of death? Was there any stronger hope of seeing him again than if he had indeed been numbered with the dead?

He, too, had changed since that day in Eaton-place. He was paler than usual, and his eyes had a haggard look, as with prolonged sleeplessness. But she dared not appropriate to herself these signs of deep feelings. Was there not enough in his parting with these people, in the thoughts of the new life that lay before him, to move him strangely?

Not once throughout that morning service did their eyes meet. He read the prayers and lessons in his grave firm voice, with no sign of faltering, every tone strong and penetrating as of old, no fragments of sentences going astray among the echoes, every word clear, resonant as a deep-toned bell.

The interval between the two services was a dreary blank for Elizabeth. The monotonous machinery of home, which had been so wearisome before her departure, seemed still more wearisome now. She shuddered at the thought that her life was to go on for ever



## STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS

and ever like this ; every Sunday an exact repetition of other Sunday. The early luncheon, enlivened by an occasional dropper-in ; the afternoon, dawdled away somehow ; the evening service, in the mournful summer dusk ; the all-pervading sense that life was an objectless business. How was she to endure these things until the end of her days ?

Evening came at last : the bells ringing with a softer sound in the balmy air : the old church more crowded than Elizabeth ever remembered to have seen it before, crowded with people who very seldom came to church, crowded with those for whom Mr. Forde had worked with an unflagging zeal—the very poor.

Mr. Luttrell read prayers, prayers which Elizabeth heard unconsciously of their meaning ; while Gertrude prayed and responded in her usual business-like way, with the air of an ancient mother assisting at the sacrifice of her son. Very long those prayers seemed to Elizabeth, but they came to an end at last, and in the deepening dusk Mr. Forde went slowly up to the pulpit.

Then, as he adjusted the newly-lighted wax candles on each side of him, needing the light very little for his own convenience, since his sermons were chiefly extempore, he looked thoughtfully downwards, and, Elizabeth looking up from her corner in the old pew, their eyes met for the first time ; his so grave and spiritual in their expression, with a far-away look, as of a man whose thoughts dwell in worlds remote from this common earth ; hers yearning, imploring, despairing.

Brief was the moment of those looks meeting. He unrolled his little black-covered volume of notes, and began the last sermon he was ever to preach in Hawleigh.

Wanting the fire of the speaker's voice and manner, the depth of pathos in some passages, the passion of faith in others, a barren transcript of that farewell address might seem commonplace enough. The things he had to say to them were things that have been said very often before at such partings ; it was only the man who was exceptional : exceptional in his earnestness, exceptional in a certain grandeur of face and manner, which, to that regretful assembly made him God-like. He told them simply, but with a fervour in those simple phrases, a warmth in those subdued tones, how he had laboured for them and loved them, with what happy results with a love that had been returned to him sevenfold, with experience that had been unutterably sweet to him. He told them how he dared to believe that much of his labour among them would be permanent ; that it was work which, done once, was done for ever ; that the seed would remain and yield a plenteous harvest, when he the sower was far away, labouring to redeem waste lands where no seed had ever been scattered, where no sheaves had ever been gathered for the Master's barns. Then, with a sudden change from mournful

tenderness to supreme enthusiasm, he told them what he was going to do. How this mission service was the realisation of a hope and a dream that had been with him more or less from the beginning, that had swelled his heart long ago, when he was a boy at his mother's knee, hearing from her dear lips sad stories of that far-away world where the light of revelation had never cloven the thick darkness, where man lived and died without God.

Of possible dangers to be encountered he spoke not at all. He showed them only the brighter side of a missionary's career; the grandeur of his privileges as a bearer of glad tidings, the vast hopes that he carried with him as the regenerator of a people lost to their God, as the very agent and lieutenant of Christ himself. He dwelt with a picturesque fancy on the natural splendour of that remote world amidst the southern sea. He spoke of those groves where the breadfruit-tree spreads its stalwart branches wide as those of patriarchal oak or elm in pleasant England; where the leafy woods in nature's calm decay are glorious with an ever-changing splendour of hue unknown in colder climes; where here and there in quiet valleys men and women live in an almost Arcadian simplicity; yet in their utter ignorance of good and evil have no such words in their vocabulary as honour, truth, or virtue; while in other isles, perchance as fair to look upon, vice and crime walk rampant, and superstition too dark for words to paint holds mankind in its unholy thrall. He told them how those islands to which he was going, discovered nearly three hundred years ago by a Spanish navigator, had been suffered to languish in utter darkness until now, and how it was his hope and prayer to be their earliest evangelist. He told them briefly of the far greater men who had gone before him, of the saints of old time, who had undertaken such missions in ages when their peril was tenfold, and then lightly touched upon the history of later missions, from the sailing of the *Duff* downwards.

At the close of that farewell address, there was scarcely one among his hearers, except the miserable girl who loved him with a too earthly love, whose heart was not warmed with some touch of his own heroic passion, and who would not have felt ashamed of a selfish desire to detain him. He seemed created to fulfil the mission he had chosen for himself; God's fitting instrument for the noblest work that was ever given unto man to do.

Upon Elizabeth's ear the solemn close of that leavetaking sounded like a funeral knell. Would she ever hear his voice again—ever, in all the dreary days to come, feel her heart stirred by those deep-toned accents—ever again look upward to that earnest face, which to-night had a grandeur that was not of the earth, earthy?

Now, perhaps for the first time, she utterly despaired of his relenting—of his turning back to take her to his heart again. He did not need her or her human love. He had so wide a life with-



out her, and beyond her—a life which she could never have shared, since she lacked all the gifts that were needed to open the door of that divine city where he dwelt in an atmosphere of light supernal. Could her feeble aspirations towards things celestial, her wavering faith, have ever enabled her to tread the path he trod? Alas, no! To-night she felt how vast was the distance that divided them; and if he had suffered her to attach herself to his career, she would have been nothing but a clog and a hindrance for him. And she felt with exceeding bitterness how easy it was for him to renounce her—for him, whose soul was lifted to the very gates of heaven by those splendid dreams with which she had no sympathy. She thought with miserable self-scorn of her fancy that he would have found his life unendurable without her; that she must needs be as necessary to his existence as he was to hers. Poor deluded fool! she had taken no account of his one supreme ambition when she made that calculation; she had thought of him only as a weak creature like herself, the slave of an earthly passion.

Throughout that eloquent sermon she had hardly taken her eyes from his face; but not often had his glance shot downwards to the dusky corner where she sat, a white still figure, phantom-like in the uncertain light. His gaze, for the most part, was directed far beyond her, to the mass of shabbily-dressed listeners who crowded the other end of the church, his peculiar flock, those English heathens he had found in the lanes and byways of Hawleigh and its neighbouring villages, some of whom had walked half-a-dozen miles to hear his farewell.

There had been a good deal of quiet crying among the women, but no dramatic or oratorical display of emotion on the part of the preacher; yet every one felt that he was deeply moved; that it was not without profound sorrow he bade them such a long good-bye. There was a solemn hush as he came down from the pulpit, and for some breathless moments the people stood motionless looking after him. Then came a favourite hymn, 'From Greenland's icy mountains,' a hymn which the congregation sang with faltering voice; tremulous sopranos among the young-ladyhood of Hawleigh testifying to the esteem in which the Curate had been held. No sound of Elizabeth's voice mingled with that psalmody; Gertrude sang in a high soprano, with a tremolo which she affected at all times, and the air of a martyr making melody as she marched towards the stake; and it seemed as if that shrill peal drew Mr. Forde's attention to the Vicar's pew. He looked that way, and saw Elizabeth standing like a statue, with a face as white as her gown.

## CHAPTER X.

\* O last love ! O first love !

My love with the true, true heart !

To think I have come to this your home,

And yet we are apart.'

EEPLESS night ; a night of tossing to and fro, and mental doubt and uncertainty, half-formed resolves, a long between love and pride ; and the early summer light shines on eager face and tired eyes that have been watching for the

When that laggard morning comes, Elizabeth Luttrell has made mind to do something very desperate, very mad perhaps ; she shrink from confessing as much to herself ; but something doing which she feels she cannot endure her life.

She will see him once more, face to face ; hear his voice speaker, and her only, once more in their lives ; touch his hand, see, in friendly farewell, and then resign herself to their parting.

But the reversal of that decree, or that any influence she can bear can make him waver in his purpose, she cherishes

There was that in his speech and manner last night spoke of a resolve no earthly forces could shake. What selfish passion, her narrow love, do against a purpose so scheme that involved the eternal welfare of millions ? For all assign the natural limits of the missionary's work, or the width of that new world over which his influence shall

she deluded herself with no hope that he might be turned when at the last moment, by the witchery of her smiles, by the power of her tears. She knew now that his world was not her world ; that wide as the east is from the west were his thoughts and her thoughts. She hoped nothing, except that he would hear her when she sought to exonerate herself from the charge of intemperance, or any flagrant wrong against him ; hear her while she told him the true history of her acquaintance with Lord Paulyn ; believe her, and carry away with him at least the memory of an one who had loved him dearly, and had never wronged him in anything as a thought.

When then they would shake hands calmly, and he would give her the blessing, the blessing of a possible saint and martyr ; and so fade for ever from her bodily eyes, leaving only that image which she must carry in her heart to the grave.

'I have no pride where he is concerned,' she thought, as she considered how vast an outrage against the conventionalities



she was about to perpetrate; 'no more pride than Madame Chantal had in her relations with Francis de Sales.'

The up-train by which most London-bound travellers of superior or first-class rank were accustomed to depart from Haverleigh was a nine-o'clock express. She thought it more than probable that Mr. Forde would go to London as the preliminary stage of his journey, and it was just possible that he might go by that train. If she called at his lodging at eight o'clock, she would secure the desired interview; she knew his early habits, and that he had generally breakfasted and begun his day's work by that hour. What Mrs. Humphreys, the carpenter's wife, might say about this untimely visit, she thought nothing; being indeed, at all times too impetuous for profound consideration of consequences.

She dressed herself quietly while Blanche was still asleep. There was a slip of a bath-room, converted from the oratory of some mediaeval châtelaine, on one side of their tower; here Elizabeth made her toilet, and then crept softly out of the bedchamber without awakening her sister from halcyon dreams of new curates yet hidden behind the curtain of fate. She went down the narrow winding stair, and out by the lobby-door, unseen by so much as a servant; and walked, by field-paths and lanes that skirted the town, towards the tranquil domicile of Mr. Humphreys. She recalled that other summer morning nearly a year ago—good heaven, what a long year!—when she had gone by the same road to make the same kind of unauthorised visit, half in sport and half in earnest, defiant, reckless, eager to do something that would bring light and colour into her monotonous life, and desperately in love with the man she pretended to hold so lightly. Then she had gone to him with a proud sense of her power to conquer and bring him to her feet, as she had sworn to do the night before in the passion of wounded pride. Now she went humbled to the door, convinced of her insignificance in the plan of his life; only anxious that he should not go away thinking worse of her than she deserved.

The street-door of the Humphreys' abode—radiant in the splendour of newly-polished brassplate and handle—was standing open as she approached. Mrs. Humphreys, engaged in conference with the butcher, occupied the threshold, and paused from her discourse with an astonished air at seeing Miss Luttrell.

That air, that look of surprise, awakened the girl to a sense of the singularity of her untimely visit; the peril of petty gossip and small rustic scandal in which she stood. She made a feeble attempt to protect herself from this hazard.

'Good-morning, Mrs. Humphreys,' she said with a friendly smile. 'I have been for a before-breakfast walk round by the common. It is so nice after London. I have a message for Mr. Forde from







H. French, del.

J. R. Batten

"HE LAST NIGHT!"

papa. Do you think he would come down-stairs for a few minutes and hear all about it? I know he is a very early riser.'

'O, Miss Luttrell, what a pity! leastways if it's anything very particular. Mr. Forde went away by the mail-train last night.'

'He went last night!' Elizabeth repeated helplessly.

'Yes, miss. It wasn't like him to travel of a Sunday evening—after that moving sermon too; there wasn't a dry eye in the church, I do believe. But the ship he sails in—the *Columbius*—leaves Liverpool this afternoon, and there was no help for it. I do hope he'll have nice weather, poor dear gentleman!' added Mrs. Humphreys with a hopeful air, as if he had been about to cross the Straits of Dover.

This was a death-blow. He had gone away, and carried with him to the other end of the world the conviction of her faithlessness.

She went slowly homewards, wondering vaguely what she should do with the remnant of her life; how she was to live on for an indefinite number of years, and eat and drink and sleep, and pretend to be happy, now that he had vanished out of her existence for ever. Then a new anger against him was slowly kindled in her breast. How could he have been so hard, so cruel, as to leave her thus, without one last word of compassion and forgiveness, without a line of farewell?

'He saw me in the church last night,' she thought, 'and yet could leave without one touch of pity. He can boast of the grandeur of his own prospects, the splendour of his own hopes, and he has not one thought for my broken life; he cares nothing what becomes of me.'

She brooded over this unkindness with deep resentment. What right had he to take possession of her soul, and then cast her off coldly to this 'beggary divorcement'?

'What does he imagine will become of me?' she said to herself. 'I suppose he thinks I shall marry Lord Paulyn in spite of his warning, and be miserable for ever afterwards. Or does he think I shall repent my sins and join some Protestant sisterhood; or die broken-hearted because of his unkindness? O, if I could only die! He might be sorry, perhaps, for that; if the news of my death ever reached his distant world; or if he were to come back to this place some day, and find my grave in the churchyard, and discover at last that I loved him well enough to die of his desertion.'



## Book the Third.

## CHAPTER I.

'I am weary of my part.

My torch is out, and the world stands before me  
Like a black desert.'

THRICE has the corn ripened on the hillsides and in the valleys round Hawleigh; thrice have come and gone all the pleasant sights and sweet sounds of summer—dog-roses blooming out their bright brief life in the tangled hedgerows; honeysuckle scenting the mild air of early autumn, and lingering late as if loth to leave the earth it adorned. Thrice have come the snows and rains and general discomforts of winter—the conventional jovialities of Christmas, church decorations, charity dinners, infant-school festivities, the annual cakes and ale, the slow-going Lent while the chilly new-fledged spring flutters its weak wings timidly, like a tender bird too soon expelled from its nest into a bleak world. All the seasons, with their unvarying duties—the same things to be done over and over again every year—have come and gone three times, and still Gertrude trudges to and fro among her poor, scattering leaflets of consolation in the shape of small gray-paper-covered tracts; and still Diana embroiders a little and sketches a little, and yawns and indulges her constitutional headache a great deal, and laments languidly that the Luttrells are not a particularly fortunate family; and still Blanche, the pert and lively, demands of the unanswering skies when Providence is going to do something for the Luttrells.

There have been changes, however, at Hawleigh. One, a dismal change from the warmth and brightness of a comfortable easy-going life to the darkness and blankness of the grave. That good easy man, Wilmot Luttrell, has slipped out of existence almost as easily as he slipped through it. His daughters found him in his study one dark November morning, two years ago, stricken with paralysis and a partial death, from which he was never to recover. He lingered long in this doubtful state, helpless, patient, mild as he had ever been; was tenderly nursed by the four girls, who had at least agreed in loving their father dearly at the last—had lingered and been conscious of their love and care, until a second stroke made all a blank. From this he never revived, but expired in that dull sleep, unconscious of the end; so closing a life which had been as gentle and harmless as a child's.

This loss—a profound affliction itself—was made all the heavier by the fact that it left the four girls a difficult problem to solve in the one all-important question how they were to live. The entire fortune which their father left behind him amounted to about three hundred a year, exclusive of the vicarage furniture, which, in its de-

crepitude and shabbiness, may have been worth something less than a hundred pounds, and the vicarage plate, worth a hundred more. With this income, and these belongings, the girls had to begin life for themselves. Aunt Chevenix came to the rescue with an offer of a hundred a year from her own purse, and advised that Elizabeth should come to live with her, and the three other girls go abroad somewhere, say Brussels or the south of France, where they could live genteelly and improve their minds, thereby escaping the loss of caste involved in any alteration of their style of living at Hawleigh. But to this they all objected. Elizabeth thanked her aunt for the offer of a home in Eaton-place, but preferred to remain where she was. 'You would soon be tired of me,' she wrote, 'when you discovered how dreary a companion I now am. And, forgive me for saying it, auntie, but your house was unlucky to me. I could not reënter it without a feeling of horror.'

Gertrude expressed her gratitude somewhat stiffly; declined to entertain the idea of lifelong banishment for the sake of gentility; hoped that she could more profitably improve her mind by the performance of her duties at Hawleigh than by the cultivation of any new accomplishments at Brussels or Lyons; was not ashamed of any diminution of style or luxury which their altered circumstances might call for; thanked Heaven she could live as contentedly beneath the humblest roof as beneath the loftiest; and farther informed her aunt that, with the consent of her sisters, she had decided on taking one of the small semi-detached villas, with bay windows and nice little gardens, in the Boroughbridge road. The furniture from the Vicarage, such of it as was adapted to this new abode, they would retain; also the tea-kettle, which was so touching a memorial of all they had lost.

Mrs. Chevenix shuddered as she read these two letters. Her nieces in a semi-detached villa, at thirty-five pounds a year, in a row of other semi-detached villas of the same pattern. What a change from the fine old Vicarage, with its ins and outs and ups and downs, sunny bow windows, magnolia and myrtle shrouded walls, its quaint old tower, everlasting memorial of ancient splendour, its wide flower-garden and grassy orchard, sloping to the setting sun. What a change! And Gertrude wrote of it as coolly as if it were nothing.

'I think my poor brother might have left *me* the tea-kettle,' she thought; 'it would have been very useful for afternoon tea, and it would have gone back to the girls afterwards.'

She pondered upon Elizabeth's letter with a deep sigh.

'Yes,' she said, 'it is nothing but the truth; the girl is sadly changed. I hardly know if I should be able to do anything for her now. All her animation is gone; and she has acquired a proud reserved manner that would repel any one who was ever so much inclined to admire her. She is handsome still; but she certainly has contrived to render herself as unattractive as it is possible for a



handsome young woman to be. Did ever any girl throw away such chances as she has had ?'

This meditation was the result of a retrospective glance at affairs during Mrs. Chevenix's last visit to Hawleigh, in the autumn before her brother's death. Lord Paulyn had been at Ashcombe during that time, and had come frequently to the Vicarage, and done his best to renew his old intimacy with Elizabeth Luttrell. But to all these friendly endeavours the girl had opposed a dead blank wall of coldness and reserve. It was in vain for the wily matron to soothe and argue. The young man answered her with smothered anger.

'There's no use in talking nonsense, Mrs. Chevenix,' he said; 'she has not forgotten that parson fellow yet, and I suppose she never means to forget him. What a pity you didn't let her have her own way and go out with him, and devote herself to the evangelisation of South-Sea islanders! I wish with all my heart she had gone; for then I couldn't have made a fool of myself hanging about here, and exposing myself to the sneers of Hilda Disney and my mother.'

'I cannot see that the affair is any business of Miss Disney's,' Mrs. Chevenix remarked with some hauteur. How dared that dependent young person to cross the woof of her schemes!

'Miss Disney has so little business of her own, that she's obliged to think of somebody else's,' replied the Viscount moodily. 'Why don't you bring her to London, ma'am?' meaning Elizabeth, and not Miss Disney. 'You might cure her of this wretched infatuation there. I suppose she has the fellow's photograph, and kisses and cries over it every night.'

'She has a great deal too much self-respect for that kind of thing,' said Mrs. Chevenix, as if she had been inside Elizabeth's brain, and inspected its cellular arrangements, from the topmost arch of the cerebrum to the base of the cerebellum.

It is possible that this suggestion of Lord Paulyn's may have had some influence with Mrs. Chevenix when she offered Elizabeth a permanent shelter in Eaton-place. That offer being rejected, she could only shrug her shoulders and resign herself to circumstances. The luxurious ease of her own existence, the scent-bottle and green fan, made a powerful armour against the slings and arrows of other people's bad fortune. If her favourite niece preferred obscure poverty to rank and wealth, she must needs indulge her humour.

'After all, it makes no real difference to me,' she said to herself. 'I only lose the indirect advantage of connection with the peerage. Such an alliance must have given me the *entrée* to the very best society; and I feel that I could have been of the greatest use to a young woman suddenly elevated to such a position. But it is idle to regret the decrees of Providence.'

So Mrs. Chevenix resigned herself to the inevitable, thanked Heaven that she possessed a good cook and a faultless dressmaker,

and went her way calmly rejoicing, knowing no weariness of that unvarying round of tea-drinkings and dinner-eatings and at homes which she called good society. But she seldom omitted to search her *Morning Post* for any small record of Lord Paulyn's existence that might perchance adorn its columns, and she even went so far as to subscribe to a fashionable sporting newspaper which was more frequently graced by his lordship's name.

Life seemed new and strange to Elizabeth in the semi-detached villa on the Boroughbridge road, strange with a bitter strangeness. A lofty soul should be, doubtless, independent of its earthly dwelling-place. 'My mind to me a kingdom is;' 'Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage.' Very noble sentiments in their way, but not given to the common herd of humanity. Elizabeth's soul was not so lofty as to rise superior to the influences of her habitation. She felt the change of tenement sorely, felt like some lost creature in the square bandboxical rooms, the prim narrow passage with its pert gas-lamp, the steep straight stairs smelling of copal varnish; almost as ill at ease as some wild denizen of the forest that has been shifted, from the vast cavern where he roamed and rolled at large, to some straitened den in a zoological garden.

And the vicarage furniture, objects which, from old association, these girls loved dearly, how mean and shabby and wobegone that poor old furniture looked in the new smart rooms, with their cheap modern paper-hanging, and trumpery cornices, and sprawling plaster roses in the centre of their ceilings! The old cracked Chelsea shepherd and shepherdess, which had seemed the natural ornaments of the tall narrow wooden mantelshelf in the vicarage drawing-room, had the forlornest air upon the polished marble slab in the new house. Diana's grand piano filled the small back drawing-room, the big old cane-seated sofa blocked the bay-window in the front drawing-room. Nothing fitted into an embrasure, or adapted itself to the shape of the rooms; and it was only when Gertrude brought that inestimable quality which she called her common sense, and which Blanche called her domineering way, to bear upon the subject, and by banishing this article and shifting the other, reduced the rooms to something like order, that they became simply habitable. Graceful, or elegant, or picturesque they never would be. Had the new tenants been able to buy bright modern furniture, on a toyshop scale, they might have endured the rooms with a certain doll's-house prettiness; but the salvage from the Vicarage looked what it was, the poor remnant of departed fortune.

There was a room down-stairs, under the back drawing-room, half sunk in the earth, but provided with a small bay-window, a sham marble mantelpiece, and described by the house agent as a breakfast-room. This the Miss Luttrells made their refectory.



'Of course, in a decent house it would be the housekeeper's room,' said Blanche, the day she first dined in this earthy chamber. 'I shall always feel as if we were cheating the servants out of their natural rights by occupying it.'

Thus began their new lives. Every one called upon them, and admired their new abode, and discussed the new Vicar, and sympathised and approved and consoled. And Gertrude pronounced with satisfaction that their social status remained firm as a rock. They had two servants, an irreproachable parlour-maid, who was never seen without a starched muslin apron, and everything was done in the nicest manner. They had a garden which might have been covered by a good-sized turkey carpet, but which was laid out in the last approved style; flower-beds of the tessellated-pavement pattern; scrolls and parallelograms, and open-tart designs done in plants of the houseleek and mouse-ear tribes; jam-tart patterns in scarlet geranium and brown leafage, lobelia and petunia, after the manner of the Duchess of Wiltshire's parterre at the Cottage near Haverstock. It is astonishing what great effects may be produced in the area of a turkey carpet by a young lady of Gertrude Luttrell's temperament.

'There is no one more ready to make sacrifices,' she said complacently. 'But whatever I have must be of the best.'

To say that Elizabeth lived in this circumscribed home would be to say too much. She existed—as toads have been believed to exist locked in marble, or comfortably niched in a block of coal. Yet not so patiently as these quiescent reptiles did she bear her fate. Her lips were mute, it is true, for she had a scornful impatience of sisterly consolation, but her soul complained perpetually. Like Job, she remonstrated with her Maker, and demanded why she was not permitted to die. All the anguish of this slow dull year had not been enough even to undermine her vigorous young life. There was scarcely the depression of a muscle in the firm round white arms, no cavernous hollows spoiled her oval cheeks. She was paler than of old; that fugitive colour which had come and gone in such flashes of brightness two years ago was rarely seen now; her eyelids had a heavy look that hinted of sleepless nights; but these were all the outward changes that had been wrought by Malcolm Forde's abandonment and her father's death.

'I never could have believed I loved my father so much,' she said to herself sadly, one dismal December afternoon, when she had taken a lonely walk as far as the road before the Vicarage, and had seen the fire-glow shining through the old-fashioned casement of her father's study. She had stood for a little while looking across the lawn at that cheery glow, with an aching heart, a heart that seemed to ache from very emptiness.

'My little world has vanished like a dream,' she thought, 'the

waters have swept over it, and left me standing on a barren rock in a great pathless sea. If I could only die, like papa, and make an end of it.'

Among those pleasing testimonies of the world's esteem which were offered to the sisters at this sad juncture was a ceremonious call from Lady Paulyn and Hilda Disney. The two ladies drove over from Ashcombe one afternoon in the ancient chariot, conducted by a postillion, who had the aspect of a farm-labourer in disguise, but at the same time looked more imposing than a coachman.

Hilda had her customary air of ladylike indifference, but the dowager peered and pryed, and expressed profoundest interest in the affairs of the four sisters.

'And you really think of remaining in this pretty little house,' she said with a gracious wonder, peering at them keenly from under her shaggy old eyebrows all the while, and peering especially at Elizabeth. 'Do you know I'm rather suprised at that. I should have thought this pokey old town would have been insufferable to you all after your loss, and that some nice place abroad would have suited you better, where you could have had a little pleasant English society in the nice inexpensive continental style—Bruges for instance, or Courtrai—I've heard there are English people at both those towns; or Dijon, or some retired little German town where things are cheap.'

'I have duties and pleasures at Hawleigh which I could never have in a Roman-catholic town,' said Gertrude.

'There seems to be a prevailing idea that transportation for life is the only remedy for our grief,' said Elizabeth, not a little contemptuously. 'I wonder our friends don't suggest Norfolk Island or Botany Bay at once. Or, since transportation is abolished, the government ought to erect a special building at Portland or Dartmoor for young women who are left alone in the world.'

The dowager vouchsafed no notice of these impertinent observations in the way of speech, but she gave Elizabeth a look from beneath those bristling penthouses which was not one of supreme affection.

'You haven't asked after my son, Miss Luttrell,' she said, turning sharply upon Gertrude, after rather an awkward pause, during which Miss Disney had looked straight out of the window with an absent air, as if she had been assisting at a visit to cottagers in whose spiritual or temporal welfare she had no personal interest.

'I beg your pardon,' stammered Gertrude, confused by this sharp attack. 'I hope Lord Paulyn is well.'

'He is very well, and I hope he is on the high road to being very happy.'

Blanche, having nothing particular to do, and not feeling herself



called upon to sustain any part in the conversation, happened to be amusing herself by the contemplation of Miss Disney. She saw the fair cold face flush, and the thin lips contract themselves ever so little at this moment.

'I suppose that means that he is going to be married,' said Diana; 'if one may be allowed to hazard a guess.'

'How quick you young ladies are when marriage is in question!' replied the dowager graciously. 'Yes, I have every reason to hope that Reginald has at last made up his mind to settle. It will be such a happiness to me if he can only be induced to give up that horrid racing stud, his place near Newmarket, and his dreadfully expensive stables in Yorkshire; but if he *can't* be persuaded to so wise a step, he will at any rate be better able to afford to ruin himself. The young lady to whom he is almost engaged is one of the richest heiresses in England. She has not rank, I admit; but the oppression of the income-tax has long ago stamped out my Conservative proclivities. I have no prejudices, Miss Luttrell, and can appreciate the grandeur of position attained by a man who began life by wheeling barrows, and could now write a cheque for a hundred thousand pounds without feeling himself any poorer when it had been cleared. That is what I call true nobility.'

'The barrows or the cheque-book, Lady Paulyn?' asked Elizabeth.

'The upward progress from one point to the other,' replied the dowager with dignity. 'I am told that Mr. Ramsay, the great contractor, eats peas with his knife, and is somewhat the slave of habit in the matter of not cleaning his nails. But I hope I have a soul above such trivialities. Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to welcome Mr. Ramsay's only child as my daughter.'

Having made this announcement, and even deigned to refresh herself with macaroons and cherry brandy (made two summers ago with the dear old vicarage cherries from the orchard Elizabeth loved), Lady Paulyn departed. But not before she had again expressed her wonder that the Miss Luttrells should prefer Hawleigh to a delightful Belgian town, with canals and stiff little avenues, where they might pace to and fro, and sit on benches, unjostled by any vulgar crowd, or such a place as Dijon, which must surely be a most agreeable town for English residents, since the very name had quite a romantic sound. The dowager lingered so long to discuss these points after she had risen to take her departure, that it was dusk when the chariot went jingling off, to the delight of the adjacent villas.

'It was really very good of her to come,' said Gertrude, watching the departing equipage complacently from the bay window. 'What a noise that postillion makes! It is a satisfaction to let our new neighbours see we are on visiting terms with the best county

people. I trust I am above attaching an undue value to such things; but I do not pretend to be ignorant of their influence.'

'Good of her, indeed!' cried Blanche indignantly. 'Horrid old thing! Anybody could see that she came to crow over Lizzie. Wicked old she-miser! I do verily believe she would like her son to marry the only daughter of Beelzebub if she had plenty of money.'

'What a pity you didn't marry him when you had the opportunity, and keep mamma's pearl necklace, Lizzie!' Diana said with a yawn. 'It would have been advancement for all of us. And here we are screwed up for life, I suppose, in this pokey little house, instead of having the run of half-a-dozen splendid places.—Ring for tea, Blanche, please. If it were not for the comfort of our early cup of tea, I should be almost tired of life.'

'Almost tired! I have hardly ever ceased to be tired of it since I was seventeen,' exclaimed Elizabeth with infinite scorn.

'Only for one brief bright summer time of love and hope,' she thought, by way of rider to that contemptuous speech.

She was silent for the rest of that evening, sitting idle in a shadowy corner apart, while the other three clustered round the lamp; Diana and Blanche engaged in elaborate fancy-work, which gave occasion for perpetual discussions about point de Venise, and Sorrento bars; Gertrude involved in a pious biography, from which she read stray passages now and then for the edification of her sisters. It was not a lively evening, any more than the rest of the evenings which these young women spent together in the unfamiliar drawing-room, with its lingering odour of size and plaster-of-Paris; but their manner of life seemed to Elizabeth just a little more dreary than usual to-night.

She was meditating upon all she had lost—in love and ambition alike bankrupt; of all the dreams that she had dreamed, from her early visions of pomp and pleasure with some unknown being who should arise out of space, like king Cophetua, at the right moment, and lift her up to the high places of the earth, to her later and more womanly dream of sweet sacrifices made for the man she loved. And she had lost all. Of these much-cherished dreams there had come no fulfilment; and being older and wiser now, and having lost the faculty of dreaming, there was nothing left her but the dull realities of the waking world as represented by a trim little newly-built villa in the Boroughbridge road.

'If I had been wiser, I suppose I should have fallen back upon my old ideas of life when Malcolm Forde flung me off, and married Lord Paulyn,' she thought. 'A word would have brought him back to me. But now even that miserable alternative is lost, and there is nothing left for me but life for ever and ever shut up in this narrow den with my sisters. I might go and live with aunt Chevenix, certainly; but that would be just a little worse. I have lost



all taste for the kind of society my aunt is so fond of, and I should have less liberty there than I have here.'

She thought a good deal about Lord Paulyn that night—not so much of him individually as of all that he could have given her—the grandeur, the independence, the power; that strong wine of pleasure which, if not happiness, was at least intoxication; that ideal existence among beautiful scenes, or surrounded with all the graces of art and luxury, the very dream of which had been fair enough to brighten her life in days gone by. He had offered her all these things, and she had rejected them, without a pang, for the love of Malcolm Forde.

'And how noble a return he made me for my constancy!' she thought bitterly, with more anger against her lost lover than she had felt for a long time.

After this, she thought very often about the brilliant position she had rejected, and for the first time thought of it with a vague regret. It was in her nature to hold a treasure lightly so long as it lay at her feet, and to appreciate it when it was lost to her. She had scorned the idea of a marriage with Lord Paulyn, while that faithful admirer had shown himself eager and devoted. She wondered a little at her own foolishness now that he was about to unite himself with some one else.

There may have been more excuse, perhaps, for these sordid thoughts in the joylessness of her present existence. Her life was so utterly barren—every morning the beginning of a day which must needs be the repetition of yesterday—the to-morrows stretching before her blank as the pages of an unused memorandum-book.

It is true that she might have occupied herself like Gertrude, in visiting the sick and poor, since she was gifted with the power of winning their confidence and even their affection. But she avoided this natural resource of lonely spinsterhood with an obstinate aversion. What! go among these people whom she had served for *his* sake? Ally herself with the last new curate, a thin pale-faced slip of a man with sandy whiskers? Descend to all the trivialities of the district-visiting community now that *his* godlike form no longer moved among that common herd? This was what she could not do.

Even the grave old churches, in which she had sat from her youth upwards, were distasteful to her. Their aspect reminded her too keenly of all she had lost—the good harmless father—the lover she had loved so madly. She seemed to hear the echoes of voices that sounded in those stony aisles no more.

The new Vicar was a pompous red-faced man, who very rarely fatigued himself with the litany or lessons, and who read the communion service in a fat voice, as if he had taken the ten commandments under his especial protection, and preached sermons on abstruse doctrinal points over the heads of his flock. The Vicar's wife was young

and fashionable, and put the simple Hawleigh folks to shame by the elegance of her attire. She had essayed to patronise the Miss Luttrells, and had told them about the changes she meant to make by and by in that dreadful barn, the Vicarage, and had congratulated them on their transference from that ancient tenement to a modern habitation. Diana and this lady got on very well together, but between the Vicaress and Elizabeth there prevailed a quiet antipathy.

It was, doubtless, her own fault that Elizabeth was lonely. Her sisters had their little batches of dear friends, and visited a good deal in a quiet way soon after their father's death, and entertained their acquaintance with afternoon tea; but Elizabeth's soul rebelled against this humdrum sociality; her footsteps refused to tread this beaten track of every-day provincial life. She preferred lonely wanderings in the very teeth of January's north-easters, on the common and in the familiar lanes where she had walked so joyously with her lover in the brief sweet days of courtship.

If she had cherished the faintest hope of his return to her, she might have been patient, she might have endured the weariness of the present, cheered by a fair vision of the future. But she deluded herself with no such hope. She had, on the contrary, a settled conviction that, once having put his hand to the plough, for Malcolm Forde there would be no turning backward. She had lured him for a little while out of his chosen path; but having broken loose from her feeble snare, he was the very last of men to return to the net.

'He was always sorry that he loved me,' she thought, 'and there was a look of rapture on his face when he preached his farewell sermon, like the joy of a man who has escaped from a great peril.'

They heard no more of Lord Paulyn's approaching marriage, standing almost alone, so far as Hawleigh proper went, in the proud privilege of the dowager's acquaintance; but Gertrude and Diana were not slow to retail the news in their morning calls and five-o'clock teas. Miss Ramsay and her possessions were enlarged upon—the husbands and brothers referred to as authorities upon the commercial world—every one having his pet theory as to which Ramsay was the great Ramsay, who had begun by wheeling barrows; one party clinging tenaciously to a certain Peter Ramsay, Son, and Silge, in the shipping line; and another pinning its faith to Alexander Ramsay, the great contractor. Fashionable newspapers were ratched, but shed no light upon the subject, nor did the local journals give tongue.

'I don't believe there's a syllable of truth in the whole story,' exclaimed the outspoken Blanche during one of these discussions, from which Elizabeth was absent. 'I daresay it's all that nasty old woman's invention. Lord Paulyn was desperately in love with my sister Lizzie, and made her ever so many offers. And she, wicked



old thing, wants us all to go and bury ourselves in some dead-and-alive Belgian town, where we should be driven mad by the carill ringing every half-hour from the rickety old church-towers.'

Miss Luttrell reproved her sister severely for the impropriety of these remarks, and the company generally looked incredulous.

It was not to be supposed that any reasonable being would believe Elizabeth's rejection of the Lord of Ashcombe. He might be hung about her a good deal—compromising her by his attentions, the rupture of that foolish engagement with dear Mr. Forde; but suppose that he had laid his coronet at her feet—that he had said her, 'Be mistress of Ashcombe in Devon, and Harberry Castle Yorkshire, the Grange near Newmarket, and the old family mans in St. James's-square'—and that she had deliberately rejected him to believe this was too much for the imaginative power of Hawleigh.

Yet the day came before very long when the eyes of Hawleigh were opened, and the eyebrows of Hawleigh lifted in surpassing wonder.

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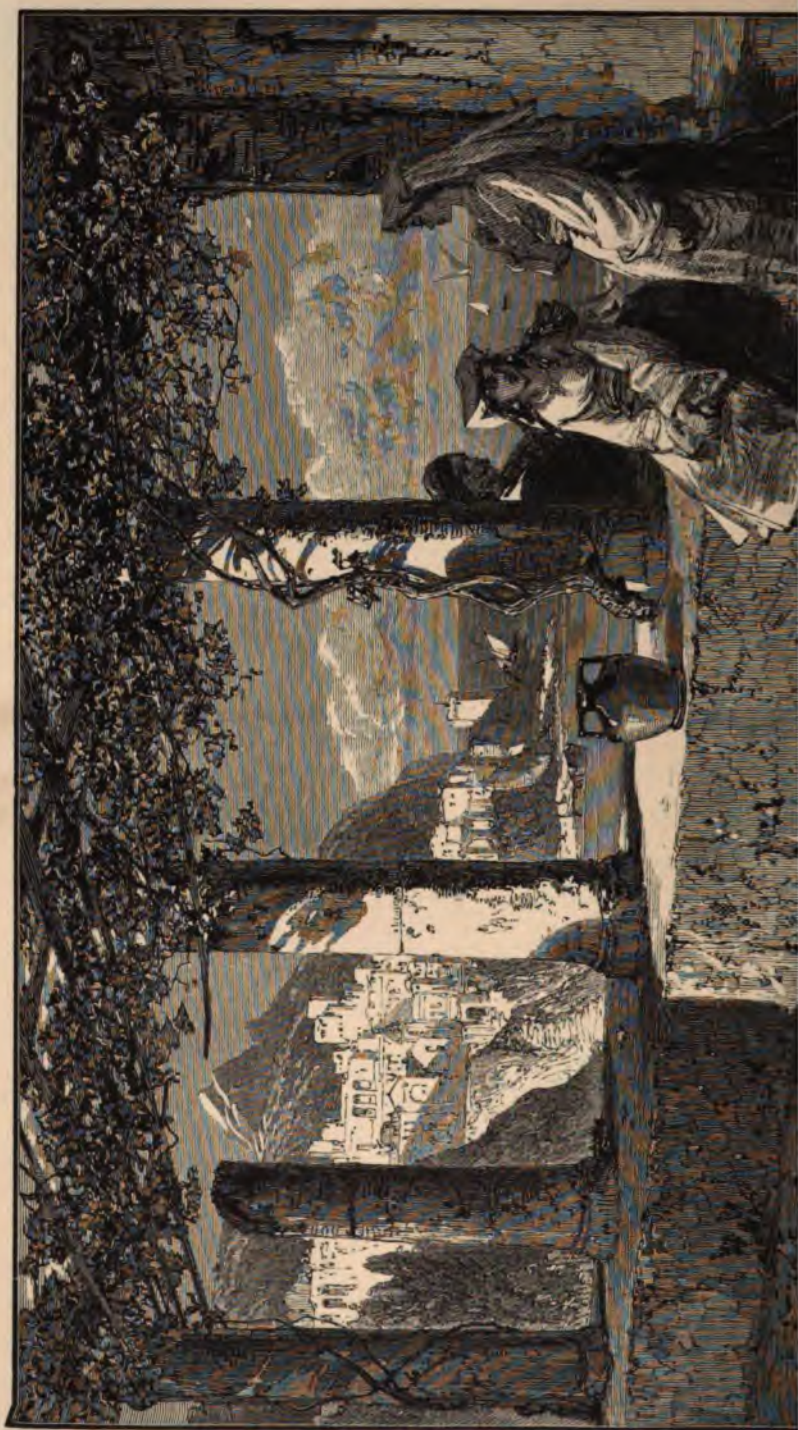
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## GOLDEN HOURS

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WHILE the vines bronze overhead,  
Midway between green and red,  
Wrinkled in the noontide haze,—  
Ever through the shady ways,  
From the light and from the glow,  
To the well the maidens go.

And beneath the trellis roof—  
Leaf and cluster in the woof—  
Oft they rest to glad the sight  
With the distant city white,  
And the bay of rippling blue  
With the one sail curving through.

Calm the scene as cloud in sky,  
Still the shining waters lie,  
And the calm the maidens share :  
Haply rival swains compare,  
Black with flaxen match, or, say,  
Eyes of brown with eyes of gray.

Happy hours of gleam and glow !  
Will the fierce winds ever blow ?  
Will the fiery storm descend,  
Coast to sweep and vines to rend,  
And the bay tempestuous roar,  
And the white sail veer no more ?

And the maidens,—is there heart  
Passion's storm will rend apart,  
Thirst for vengeance, fierce despair,  
Dagger from untwisting hair  
Sudden snatch'd and fury-spel,  
Till the silver curdles red ?

Golden hours of sunny calms,  
Drooping lids, and folded palms,  
Evermore the tempest sleeps  
Coiling in profoundest deeps,  
Quick to break in bluest skies,  
Quick to blaze in calmest eyes.

WILLIAM SAWYER.



## IMAGINARY LONDON

A delusive Directory

BY GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA

### XIV. TRIBULATION-VILLAS AND UNSUBSTANTIAL-GROVE, N.N.W.

PRAY observe the point of the compass denoting the postal district in which the localities of which I propose to treat in this present paper are situated. That point is nor'-nor'-west, and if you add thereto by south, with a slight inflection towards the east, my purpose will be served, although he who is accustomed to con the shipman's card in a rational manner may be puzzled. My aim, as regards the points of the compass, is mystification. I am particularly anxious that you should *not* know where Tribulation-villas and Unsubstantial-grove are really to be found; for I have lived in the first, and I still continue to reside in the second, and I don't wish anybody to call on me. Why on earth should they? I never call on anybody. I never answer letters, when I can help it; yet people persist in calling and in writing.

There are the visitors hitherto totally unknown to you, and who come unprovided with any introduction save a statement of their own (entirely lacking confirmation), that they knew your grandmother, and that moreover they remembered you when you were a little boy in a frill, with blue eyes and auburn hair curling beautifully. You may happen to be as swarthy as General Othello, and, so far as you are aware, you may never have had a grandmother; but, granting your possession and your remembrance of such a relative, and that your visitor knew her—what then? My own grandmother has been dead these fifty years: why should a person, who puts his hat under the chair when (very reluctantly) I ask him to take a chair, and who brings with him into the room a faint but unmistakable odour of cold rum-and-water, make his acquaintance with my relative the plea for the request for a loan of seven shillings and sixpence, to be repaid punctually next Tuesday morning; and why, when I refuse to advance the desiderated three half-crowns, or any smaller amount (for the man who knew your grandmother is a most accommodating soul, and will descend so low as the ridiculous sum of one shilling), should my visitor, as he shambles out of the apartment, while I follow him into the hall, keeping as sharp a look-out as I am able on the hats and umbrellas, murmur between his teeth that the world has used him very harshly, that he should never have expected this from me,

and that calmer reflection will teach me that my grandmother would never have treated a reduced gentleman in such a manner? I think my grandmother, who, I have been given to understand, was a woman of spirit, would have rung the bell for her black footman (it is always safe to brag of the grandeur of your family in bygone days; and who can prove that my grandmother hadn't a black footman, and a coachman to boot?) to turn the reduced gentleman out of doors.

If you happen to see my name in the *Court Guide* or the *Post-office London Directory*, with such or such an address affixed to it, don't imagine for a moment that I live there. I don't want you to call, whether you knew my grandmother or not. I am not in the least ambitious to receive post-cards containing the price-list of Messrs. Fouzel and Elderberry's favourite wines, or an envelope full of little scraps of coloured stuff as samples of Messrs. Counter and Jumper's newest spring fashions. I am not in the least interested in the report drawn up by the Reverend Mordecai MacCadger of the statistics of destitution in the parish of St. Sgybobbs-the-Martyr, with an (unstamped) envelope addressed to that reverend gentleman, and a neatly-printed form to be filled up with the amounts of my various anticipated donations to the Ragged School, the Blanket Society, the Coal and Coke Union, the Pickled-onions Club, the Young Men's Association, and the Mothers' Scanmag Meeting of St. Sgybobbs parish. I have nothing to do with the Cosmogonic Bank, or the Garotters' Mutual Assurance and Investment Society, or the Indian Archipelago Preserved Cats'-meat Company, Limited; nor am I desirous that the prospectuses of those doubtless flourishing, but to me indifferent, enterprises should cram my waste-paper basket. Yet to these, and hundreds of missives of a similar nature, you must needs be a victim, if you are foolish enough to have a local habitation and a name given to you in the greater or the lesser red-books. Auctioneers send you catalogues of sales which you have not the remotest idea of attending; booksellers pester you with lists of works you don't wish to read, or copies of which are already on your shelves; 'an admirer of literature' writes from the Land's End to ask you for your autograph; and 'Euphrasta' sends you six closely-written pages of mad poetry from the Giant's Causeway, which (the verses, not the Causeway) she requests you to insert in the next number of the magazine of which you are no more the editor than you are an Elder Brother of the Trinity House. I say nothing of one's legitimate friends, acquaintances, and duns; I say nothing of the scoundrels who send you anonymous letters. The circulars and the prospectuses are in themselves more than sufficient to drive the man who loves peace and quiet to live nowhere, or, at least, in so very imaginary a district of Imaginary London as that which comprises Tribulation-villas and Unsubstantial-grove.

I occupied apartments in the villas for nearly nine months, and



I am delighted to think that not more than nine people, out of the millions and odd Londoners, were aware that I was a denizen of the tenements of Tribulation. I know that 'too partial friends' have followed me home; that traps have been set and espials made for me; that designing men have even paid for hansom cabs for me late at night, stating that they would drop me at my 'crib.' Ha, ha! They would have liked to know where the crib was. It was nowhere. 'We are all going to the deuce,' cried the dissipated student. Quevedo. 'You are at the deuce already,' answered the cynic. It was it with Tribulation-villas. While the vain and the unthinking volunteered to accompany me thither, I was there; for Tribulation villas were in my own brain. They were imaginary, and nowhere.

Picture to yourself a broad, shabby-genteel suburban street, an omnibus route, but in which the appearance of a brougham was a rare occurrence indeed. This was Great Botherum-street. It was lined with multitudinous blocks of villas, interspersed with groups of shops, mainly public-houses, greengrocers', butchers', and new vendors'. In all my experience I never abode in a community so much addicted to sending out, at all hours of the day and night, pints of mild ale (in the jug), summer cabbages, scrags of mutton and penny newspapers, as were the inhabitants of Great Botherum-street and its many villas: among which last I remember Tribulation (mine own), Embarrassment, Deficiency, and Confusion. I think, too, there was a row of houses called Destitution-villas, high up towards the station of the Nor'-nor'-east Hopeless Junction Railway, but of this fact I am not quite certain.

Stay! commercial and architectural importance was given to Great Botherum-street by Keys and Peddles' pianoforte manufactory—a commanding building, one wing of which abutted on Tribulation villas. I am not aware whether it is a mechanical possibility to make second-hand pianofortes at the commencement of their manufacture; still I never saw an instrument come out of Keys and Peddles' that had not a second-hand look. Several rather pretty girls in the district used to be pointed out to me as 'silkers'. Keys and Peddles' 'cottages' and 'cabinets' and 'upright grand' and by the process of 'silking' I understood that process of fluting the crimson veil which hides the front of the upright pianoforte about the keys from the eyes of the profane vulgar. I always had an insane desire to know what there was behind that cosy fluted screen. Catgut, I suppose, or wire, or washleather, or something of that kind: but to me it has been an act-drop, and I have loved to find a number of small *fantoccini* or marionettes behind it, ready to come forward when the curtain rose, and dance to the movement of keys and pedals. Absurd as is the notion, is it a very unnatural one? When you were a child, did you not cut open the bellows and punch a hole in your drum? and what solemn joy did you not

in finding the back of the parchment inscribed with legends about 'This Indenture' witnessing, of whose nature you had not the remotest idea? To this day the sheepskin drum-head has wellnigh as great an attraction as the silken pianoforte screen. It is but human nature. Don't you want to know what there is inside the dome of St. Paul's, behind that gate in the wall of Northumberland House, or in the centre of the huge gas reservoir at Blackfriars? In the last-named instance, reason should teach you that the receptacle contains gas; but fancy whispers to you that there may be something else there—spirits of the gas, or, perchance, elves of carburated hydrogen. Are there not spirits of the lamp and gnomes of the gold mine?

A good many *employés* of Keys and Peddles' lived in the lodgings in which Tribulation-villas were let out. The general report concerning these artisans was, that they could all earn wages of fifty-five shillings a week, all the year round, and that they were all on the road to ruin owing to 'the drink.' I never saw or heard any of them in a state of inebriety; but I suppose that they confined their bibulous practices to the domestic hearth, and that they were the customers who were continually sending out to the public-houses for pots of mild ale. Who the particular firm of Beer Kings may have been who brewed for the taverns of Great Botherum-street, I know not; but the stock always on hand of fourpenny ale was, to all appearance, enormous. What connection can there be between pianoforte-making and mild ale? Apart from Messrs. Keys and Peddles' workpeople, the art musical was rather strongly represented in Tribulation and the cognate villas by a goodly number of pianoforte-tuners: meek, inoffensive people mostly, whose odd existence was spent in wandering up and down London, setting other people's property to rights. I knew one of these tuners, Mr. Coop, very well:—a small, lithe, reedy man verging on sixty years, and who would have been silvery gray years before, if the persistent flaxen of his locks would have permitted him to take that liberty. He was one of those people who never perceptibly age till all at once they become superannuated. Until three-score or so they are boys; presto! of a sudden they are patriarchs. Coop had a small round pippin-like face, with very rosy cheeks and smiling lips, but the sweetness of his smile was marred somewhat by the fact of his having scarcely any teeth. His eyes should have been bright blue; but they were of that vacant, cheerless cerulean hue that is worn by the sky before the sun rises. There was no sun, there was no moon, in his firmament, poor fellow. There was total eclipse. Mr. Coop was blind. He had been brought up in one of the admirable asylums designed for the relief of the sufferers from one of the most awful afflictions with which the Almighty has visited his creatures, and had learned to weave baskets and mats, and all kinds of pretty nicknacks, and to read very deftly



with his fingers from embossed type. But these accomplishments, alas, are mastered by most blind folks, and when poor Coop left the asylum, there seemed a sad likelihood, in default of customers to purchase rice-straw baskets and particoloured mats, of his descending to the stage of a street-corner, and a dog with a string, and a tray in his mouth. He was fortunately saved from this, and the indignity of a placard with 'Poor blind' inscribed on his breast, by the kindness of a lady whose common sense happened to be in proportion—a very rare occurrence—to her charity. Coop had a taste for music: a faculty very often and mercifully developed among the blind. He tried to obtain an engagement as an organist; but his lungs were weak, and the atmosphere of the chapel where he did manage to get temporary employment made him ill. Then his patroness, who was one of the congregation of the chapel, took him in hand, and had him taught pianoforte-tuning; and as a tuner he now does remarkably well, earning, perhaps, *bon an, mal an*, a couple of pounds a week. He is a very cheerful and resigned little man, and a confirmed bachelor: the last fact he accounts for by the difficulty of finding a 'dark' or blind lady who would marry him. For my part, I think there are a good many young ladies, both 'dark' and 'fair'—I allude to their complexions—who would be very glad to wed the harmless pianoforte-tuner if he put the momentous question to them; but perhaps he is difficult to please; and, all things considered, perhaps the blind are best alone. 'I love Spain,' said John Hookham Frere, referring to the *dehesas y despoblados* of that half-desert but delicious land, 'because God has got so much land there in his own holding.' Thus is it with the desolation of blindness. There is nothing between you and Providence. You are in His hand; and with the eyes of your soul, which no blindness can obscure, you look to Him in cheerful submission for help. Man can do little for you; and a dog will render you more service than a duke can do. Let us pity the poor blind with all our hearts; but at the same time let us be thankful to remember the capital animal spirits with which the majority of those deprived of sight are blessed, and how very seldom they tumble down-stairs and break their bones.

Fortunately the tuners did not exercise their useful but cacophonous vocation in Tribulation-villas; but went farther a-field to screw up flaccid strings to concert pitch; and indeed, in vindication, perhaps, of the immutable principle that the cobbler's children are always ill-shod, and that the maker of birchbrooms never whips his offspring, there was a singular absence of actual harmonic sounds in this neighbourhood, where so many people earned their livelihood by some business more or less connected with music. Besides the tuners, there were professors of the pianoforte and singing at the villas. On the Tributatory floor above me lived a German who taught the French horn; yet I never heard him attempt the performance

of a solo on that instrument. Monsieur Baragonin, dealer in musical boxes, Æolian harps, accordions, and cuckoo-clocks (from Geneva), lived next door to me; and over the way the front parlours were in the occupation of Mr. Scrotty, who provided quadrille bands for evening parties. Nay, at certain times of the day you might perceive, loftily pacing along Great Botherum-street on their way to the not very far off cavalry-barracks in Beau Nash-street, divers stalwart and moustached gentlemen in military uniform, who were said to be musicians in the Life Guards pink. They never brayed away at the trombones or banged at the kettledrums in Great Botherum-street. Nobody played upon the pianofortes, and the loudest sound proceeding from Messrs. Keys and Peddles' factory was that of a circular-saw. The cry of a child 'spanked' at No. 1 Tribulation could be heard at 97 Embarrassment villas, many roods off. No organ-grinders ever came to the place to play, although, oddly enough, they often resorted to musical craftsmen in the villas to have the newest popular melodies 'set' on the brass combs and pegs of their instruments. But it was elsewhere that these brown foreigners resorted to drive peaceable people distracted with the strains of 'God bless the Prince of Wales,' 'Down among the coals,' and 'A starry night for a ramble.' Once, and once only, a 'Green Baize' or German band strayed into Great Botherum-street, and, with their usual stolidly Teutonic conceit, flattered themselves with the hope of creating a remunerative impression by the performance of the overture to *Der Freischütz*. The typical Hans Breitmann of the gang—he was the varlet who played the French horn—had the impudence to knock at No. 9 and ask for money. Little did he reek—the vain German—that another Hans Breitmann dwelt there. 'Twas Hans the second himself who, in his shirt-sleeves, and with a big meerschaum pipe between his blonde-bearded lips, opened the door to the impertinent summoner. He did not even condescend to answer him in their mutual tongue. He merely observed, 'Ve make French horn here, and you blay him tam bad; go fay, you beest Garman!' and so slammed the portal in his countryman's face. What sublime contempt foreigners, away from their own land, have for their compatriots! Did you never hear Sambo rail at Quashee as a dam black nigger? and would you be surprised to hear Mr. Montmorency de Lypey, whose mamma still sells fried fish in Petticoat-lane, denounce Mr. Plantagenet Shobbers as a 'confounded Jew'?

But what was there, it may be asked, of tribulation in these villas of mine. I don't know how it was, but the whole neighbourhood always seemed to be in hopeless difficulties. There was always something wrong in everybody's domestic affairs. Speaking personally, I may admit that I was myself under one of the awfulest (imaginary) clouds conceivable when I went to lodge in the villas. I knew that my landlady was in even direr straits, and I thank her kindly for



her friendly hint, late one Saturday night, to the effect that she expected the brokers in, on a matter of three quarters' rent, the first thing on Monday morning, thus giving me the opportunity—it was prior to the passing of the Lodgers' Protection Act—of preserving from the clutches of the Sheriff of Middlesex a folio copy of Bayle's Dictionary, a skeleton clock, a cruet-stand, and a bust of Garibaldi: chattels which I much prized. The process-servers and bailiffs of the District County Court were always hanging about Tribulation-villas, and there was always somebody being summoned or sold up. As quarter-day approached, there was always some tenant of a villa who was found to take time by the forelock by shooting the moon—a suburban euphemism for running away, without paying your rent, in the middle of the night, and with as much furniture as you can persuade the friendly proprietor of a spring van to cram into his vehicle. Among the landladies of Tribulation-villas who did pay their rent it was the custom, enforced by bitter experience, to exact payment in advance from their weekly tenants, lest the lodgers, when they went out for a walk, should forget their way home again and never come back. The public-house at the corner, by the station of the Hopeless Junction Railway, might have gone by the sign of the Cave of Adullam, so constantly frequented was its darksome bar by those who were in debt and those who were discontented. Three successive station-masters of the Hopeless Junction did I know, and they all came to grief. Drink was the perdition of the first, debt of the next, and dominoes of the last. Among those ladies of Great Botherum-street who were not 'silkers,' milliners and dressmakers abounded; but they never seemed to make or to sell any dresses or any bonnets. They merely announced their intentions on tarnished brass plates screwed on to their area railings, and waited for customers who never came. The tradespeople were not often bankrupt—they were too poor for that, and bankruptcy is still an expensive luxury—they merely 'rubbed on,' and borrowed money at usurious interest, or, shutting up their shops in their despair, went off to Queensland or to the Diamond Diggings. At last I thought it was time for me to go too. I found that I was acquiring a lurking furtive manner; that I was shy of being looked at by strangers; and that I had dreams about the District County Court. I didn't owe anybody money in the neighbourhood; but I felt that, as an inhabitant of Tribulation-villas, I must either get into debt at the chandler's shop, or run up a score at the Cave of Adullam, or order a bonnet without having the means to pay for it, or do something or another to fall into difficulties, as my neighbours had fallen, or else go away. I elected to adopt the last-named course. I ducked under, far beneath the waves of the great ocean of London life. I abode for a time, under submarine circumstances, down below Nathaniel, many times full fathom five, down among the coral

reefs and the cray-fish and the mermaids and the mermen, and I came up again at last in Unsubstantial-grove.

That is where I am staying now ; but I beg you to bear in mind that I am positively going away next week, and that there is absolutely no use in calling upon me. I am never at home ; I am out of town ; I am ill. The smallpox and typhoid fever are always rife in this neighbourhood ; and a notorious gang of garotters have their headquarters in Deadman's-thicket at the bottom of the grove. For goodness-gracious sake, don't come and see me, and don't write, especially through the medium of a post-card. Besides, there isn't such a place as Unsubstantial-grove at all. It is as imaginary as Utopia, or the New Atlantis, or the kingdom of Cockaigne. When I say that I am 'staying' in this shadowy place, I use the term in preference to saying that I 'live' there, seeing that nobody lives, properly so speaking, in Unsubstantial-grove. Families come like shadows, and so depart ; and from Christmas to Lady-day, from Midsummer to Michaelmas, there is but one continuous course of flitting. I scarcely know myself whether I came to sojourn in the grove the day before yesterday or twelve months ago. I mean—as I announced on a previous occasion—to depart immediately. My trunks are packed, my boat is on the shore, and my bark is on the sea ; the butcher has been satisfied, the baker settled with ; an arrangement has been made with the laundress, and the milkman (after much difficult and delicate negotiation) has listened to reason. Yet, perhaps, am I destined to linger among the Unsubstantials until I die. Who has not packed his trunk, and taken his ticket, and shaken hands all round, and made as though to depart, and yet has never gone away at all ?

It cannot, however, be urged as an objection against the denizens of Unsubstantial-grove that they manifest any want of alacrity in striking their tents and removing their encampment elsewhere. I have had five sets of next-door neighbours on my right since I came into the grove. Neighbour the first was a lady ; the widow, it was announced, of a colonel in India, with four tall daughters, all with taller chignons of golden auburn air, and who, from the sprigged-muslin dresses they wore in summer time, and their generally dimly-towering appearance, bore a not remote resemblance to a quartette of camelopards. Mrs. Colonel Giraffe was, on the other hand, a little dark woman, with sparkling black eyes and thickly arched black eyebrows and dusky yet rich red lips, who was generally visible—when I caught sight of her in the back-garden—in a riding-habit. I could never discern that she took any more equestrian exercise than a Doge of Venice might have done ; unless, indeed, she kept a Shetland pony in the cellar or a rocking-horse in the front parlour. I know she had a horsewhip, at least I fancy so from the sounds of some little implement I have heard through the



thin partition wall, accompanied by sundry shrill yelps in the low voice. I imagine that she and the four tall daughters fell out sometimes, and that the *cravache* was introduced as a peacemaker. First I thought she was a fine lady; but after a while the inevitable placard, with 'Apartments furnished,' appeared in the front window. It is just as likely, however, that Mrs. Colonel Giraffe had designs besides lodging-letting, and that she was bent on the able design of marrying the four tall daughters to peers of the realm, officers in the Guards, members of the Stock Exchange, or to anybody else whom the Fates matrimonial might cause to straggle into Unsubstantial-grove. At all events, there was the printed announcement as to apartments furnished; but nobody, so far as I know, information (mainly derived from a communicative charwoman) attended, ever came to take the lodgings, save a man in a cloak and white hat with a rusty black band round it, who engaged the first floor at a rent of two guineas a week for six months, certainly excused himself from paying a deposit or giving any reference, on the plea that he had just arrived from the quicksilver mines of Ecuador, that his luggage, in nine packing-cases, was on its way from Southampton, per goods train, on the London and South Western Railway, and that he was first cousin to the Earl of Kailbroseroy, then sojourning on his estates in Scotland. Saying that he felt faint, the glib tenant was accommodated with 'a slice of seedy cake and a glass of sherry wine;' and on his departure he shook hands all round with Mrs. Colonel Giraffe and her four tall daughters, promising them tickets for the Italian opera and invitations to Kailbroseroy Castle. He did not return to occupy the first floor; but after he had disappeared, it was found that he had taken a card-basket, a photographic album, and the cushion from a music-stool with him: under that pretext he presumed. The articles could not have fetched much at the pawnshop; still they were something, and the rogue had not wasted his time. Ah, what busy bees these rascals are! Do you think my little story is utterly imaginary? My dear madam, there are plenty of silly enough to be gulled by rascals as shallow and as impudent as he in the cloak every hour of every day in the year. But for the poor donkeys—heaven bless their simple hearts!—the rascals would die of starvation; which would be a pity, for what would the world come of the British drama and the three-volume novelists?

Mrs. Colonel Giraffe and her four tall daughters did not last long after the occurrence of this domestic episode. The charwoman told our housemaid that Colonel Giraffe had come home very late one night from India, in a hansom cab and in liquor, and that he 'looked up a shine.' Whether he did or did not, or who or what he was, I ken not; the entire Giraffe family faded away into the indistinctness of unsubstantialities, and the grove knew them no more. Rarely do we ask any questions about the departed in this phantom locality.

When they come, we do not expect our neighbours to stop long; and when they go, we shrug our shoulders and say that we always thought it would turn out so. There is a vicious old spinster in the second-floor opposite who is always reconnoitering my dining-room windows through a double-barrelled opera-glass. I suspect that she takes it very unkindly of me that I do not go away (I am going away directly, believe me), or that I do not jump on some member of my family, or attack the cook with a carving-knife, or at least commit suicide. If that vicious spinster could only see me come down the front-garden steps, with a detective in plain clothes on either side to escort me to the four-wheeled cab which was to convey me to Newgate,—if she could only espy a pair of handcuffed wrists ill-concealed beneath the cuffs of my coat,—and if she could only learn that I had been arrested for forging Turkish bonds or Russian bank-notes, or was to be handed over to the French police, under the provisions of the Extradition Treaty, for assisting in burning down the Tuileries and the Hôtel de Ville,—her wicked old life would, I am certain, be made supremely happy. But no, no, Miss Biddy M'Caw—she is an Irish old maid, I am persuaded; the most rancorous species of spinster extant—I'll see you out yet; although, as I repeat, I really mean to quit Unsubstantial-grove the very moment that circumstances over which I have no control warrant my departure.

The Giraffe family next door were succeeded by a Baronet and his lady, a large family of young children, a lady's-maid, a page-boy, and a French governess. That he was a real Baronet there could be no doubt, for I saw his name in Sir Bernard Burke's *Baronetage*, to say nothing of the coat-of-arms, with the 'main coupé,' on the page. Yet must Sir Ignis Fatuus Mirage, Bart., be accounted among the unsubstantials. His appearance was grand, his conversation charming, his deportment urbane. He was in every way adapted to adorn the high social station to which the favour of the Crown had called his distinguished ancestors, and Lady Mirage was the most elegant, the most accomplished, and the most magnificent of her sex, whose violet moire dresses used to train a yard and a half on the ground as she stepped into her hired brougham—the best that a grateful nor'-nor'-west by south livery-stable could provide her ladyship with. She never went abroad save in that brougham, with a Maltese terrier looking out of the window, and a Dutch pug, with his tongue hanging between his teeth, supporting his paws on the edge of the opposite casement, and the page-boy on the box. They gave receptions, dinners, *thés dansantes*, kettledrums, conversaciones, musical breakfasts, private theatricals, charades, tableaux vivants, spiritual séances, did the Mirages. I believe even that a semi-public meeting of the Association of Sympathisers with the Down-trodden Circassians, with the Marquis Wallsend in the chair, was once held at Sir Ignis's house; but a few months afterwards, and all



was in the dust. They were here to-day and there to-morrow. was Unsubstantial-grove; there was the Court of Bankruptcy; from the narrative of the proceedings before that tribunal, it is that Sir Ignis Fatuus Jacquet Lantern Mirage, Bart., was in any means a stranger in Basinghall-street. His last bankruptcy took place under the good old laws, when bankrupts were not expected to pay anybody, and, if they had a handle to their name, were frequently complimented by the commissioner on the promptness with which they had wound up an estate of no value, and a dividend of nothing in the pound. I don't know where the Baronet went after this catastrophe: the incidence of which, by the way, astonished nobody. We all expected that such a career could have but one termination, especially in Unsubstantial-grove. The stable keepers, the butchers and bakers and florists and fishmongers and other trading people, made a vast outcry against the Baronet, declared that he had got recklessly into their debt without any reasonable prospect of being able to pay them, and did not hesitate to apply to this member of a patrician order the opprobrious epithets of 'adventurer' and 'swindler;' but take him for all that, he was not such a very bad friend to trade, this bankrupt Baronet. He made business brisk; he caused money to circulate; he got hard-working people into constant and remunerative employment. If he did not pay himself, he was the cause of payment to others; and if the livery-stable keeper got nothing for the hire of his horse, somebody must have paid the coachman who drove the horse; the ostlers who groomed them; somebody must have bought the oats which they ate. What more would you have than that the money should be brisk and money circulate? The happiness of the great number is the grand desideratum; and for one complaining fishmonger or butcher, or livery-stable keeper, how many deserving tradesmen, with their wives and families, did the Baronet of Unsubstantial-grove indirectly, but still effectually, help to keep? Nor did the tradespeople, I fancy, take much harm by his bankruptcy; for the Baronet had scarcely blown over before Lord Claude Neverpay, the Baronet of Soldup's fifth son, took No. 17 in the grove, a furnished house, and had not the slightest difficulty in obtaining credit quite as easy as that which had been enjoyed by my distinguished neighbor. Is it that tradespeople like to be cheated, I wonder, or is it that they prudently make the ready-money customers pay for their debts, and thus balance matters, so as to make both ends meet snugly?

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## THE WORKING OF THE POSTAL TELEGRAPH

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IN a small street opening out of the east side of Moorgate-street stands the central station of the Postal Telegraph—a public institution which may be termed a curiosity shop of engineering, scientific, and manual appliances, exhibiting that highest test of genius, ‘the infinite capacity for work.’

The building consists of a basement floor, a ground floor, and a first, a second, and a third floor. Before the transfer of the telegraph from the Electric Company to the Post Office, the basement of the building was set apart for the engine-room, the messengers’ waiting-room and dining-room, and the store-rooms. The first floor was set apart for the accountants’ and engineers’ offices; the second floor for the board-room, and the rooms of the Secretariat and the Intelligence Department. The second floor was mainly given up to the dining-room of the female and male staff. The third floor was devoted to the receipt and transmission of messages. There was some vacant space on each floor in the wings.

The building has been entirely rearranged by the Post Office.

The whole of the second and third floors, with the exception of one small room, has been given up to the work connected with the receipt and transmission of messages. On the first floor, offices for the engineering staff and the superintendent of the station have been retained; but the board-room and the rooms of the Secretariat have been converted into a dining-room and kitchen for the female staff, and a sitting-room for the matron. On the ground floor, space has been found for a ‘sending-out’ or delivery room, with a retiring-room for the female sending-out clerks; for the messengers’ dining-room, and for the office of their inspectors; for the dining-rooms of the male staff; for a writing-room for the Press; for the surgery and consulting-room of the medical officers; for the Intelligence Department, and for the engineers’ workshops. The basement has been appropriated to the engines, the batteries, and the stores.

On the third floor of the building is what is called ‘The Provincial Gallery,’ or workshop of the establishment.

The Central Station is mainly a ‘forwarding’ or ‘transmitting station,’ that is to say, its chief business consists in the receipt of messages from one place for retransmission to some other place. It does receive some messages for delivery within a certain area, and during the night it is open for the collection of messages from the public; but its work is mainly that of transmission.

The Provincial Gallery receives and dispatches messages.



means of wires and *pneumatic tubes*. What is a pneumatic tube? Any one may extemporise a pneumatic tube. Get a piece of glass-tubing just sufficient in diameter to allow a pea to fit in it and move freely. Place the pea at one end of the tube, and the other end in your mouth, and suck it, when the pea will 'rush' into your mouth. The cause is, that by sucking you withdraw the air from before the pea, and then the air behind it *presses* it forward, making it seem to rush of its own accord. All 'sucking' is in like manner affected, whether it be of an orange, or the breast by an infant. The term 'pneumatic' tube is only the scientific expression for 'air' tube, and the cause of locomotion thus brought into action is the *pressure of the atmosphere*, which is found to be  $14\frac{1}{2}$  lbs., or roundly 15 lbs., to the square *inch* of surface. In other words, the atmosphere presses upon all surfaces at the rate of about 15 lbs. to the square inch, and it is easy to conceive that a pressure of 15 lbs. on every square inch of surface will constitute a considerable driving force for locomotion.

In sucking the glass tube we simply 'exhaust' it of air; the same thing occurs in the pneumatic postal tubes, only the 'exhaustion' of the tubes is effected by suction pumps worked by steam.

At the Central Station, the pneumatic tubes are arranged immediately opposite to the entrance from the Metropolitan Gallery. The tubes are, in a minor degree, used to connect the Provincial Gallery with other parts of the Central Station, but mainly to connect the Central Station with certain other stations, which collect, or collect and deliver, more messages than could be conveniently and expeditiously transmitted by wire.

There are seventeen pneumatic tubes in operation to and from various parts of London, the longest being that which goes to Fenchurch-street, namely, 980 yards. The second in length is that to Leadenhall-street, 659 yards. The great majority vary in length from about 600 to 200 yards. The diameter or bore of the tubes varies from  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch, such being the only two diameters used in this connection. The time taken for the transmission in the greatest length, 980 yards, is, by pressure, one minute and five seconds; by vacuum, one minute and twenty seconds. The steam-engine in use is a forty-horse power in every case. The total length thus traversed by pneumatic agency is 5974 yards. For a distance of only 50 yards, four to five seconds suffice for the transmission.\*

It is, too, rather startling to find that this practical application

\* The names and lengths of the tubes are as follows: Fenchurch-street, 980 yards; Leadenhall-street, 659 yards; Baltic Coffee-house, 590 yards; Gresham House, 588 yards; Threadneedle-street (two stations), 566 and 559 yards; Cornhill, 490 yards; Old Broad-street, 370 yards; Lloyd's, 343 yards; Stock Exchange, 314 yards; Founder's-court, 223 yards; Anglo-American Office, 62 yards; Indo-European Office, 57 yards; Engineers' Office, 50 yards; South Gallery, 50 yards; Intelligence Department, 44 yards; Metropolitan Gallery, 29 yards.

of a scientific principle was an absolute necessity; for it appears that it would be impossible to serve these London stations properly in any other way than by pneumatic tube. The messages sent from and to these stations are very important as well as very numerous. They are, moreover, crowded into the busy part of the day, between the hours of 11 A.M. and 4 P.M., and they are liable to sudden augmentations when the turn of an important market, or the declaration of a new rate of discount, or a political crisis, gives a stimulus to trade or to speculation. It would be impossible, in the case of such offices, to make such a provision of wires or staff as would enable the officials to get the work off promptly; whereas the tubes, which will transmit, according to their diameter, from eight to twenty messages in one carrier, afford the required facilities.

The extension of the pneumatic tubes westward has commenced, and no doubt ere long even the House of Commons and other important centres will enjoy the benefits of this successful innovation.

The extension to Charing-cross is in hand; and the Central Station, the General Post Office, and the Temple-bar Office are now connected by a double tube, forming a complete circuit, and having a column of air always passing through it. The air is moved either by pressure or by vacuum, or by both pressure and vacuum. The diameter of the tube is three inches. The length of the *double* tube from Telegraph-street to the General Post Office is 852 yards each; the length from the General Post Office to the Temple-bar Office is 1333 yards each.

The double tube forms what may be called a pneumatic railway, with an up line and a down line, having their termini in Telegraph-street and at Temple-bar, and an intermediate station at the General Post Office. The up and down lines may be open through their entire length, or may be blocked by switch-boxes at the intermediate station. The terminal stations can send carriers through to each other without stoppage at the intermediate station, or can send carriers to be stopped by the switch-box at the intermediate station; and the intermediate station, when it knows a through carrier to be coming for one of the termini, can, if it happens to have any messages of its own for that terminus, switch out the through carrier, insert its own messages, and send the carrier on again without any appreciable delay. The tube being of large size, the carriers are proportionately large, and each will hold about fifty messages.

When pressure and vacuum are employed, the distance between Telegraph-street and Temple-bar is traversed in *three* minutes. When vacuum only is employed, five minutes are required for the transmission. The tube is now working much within its power, and yet it is doing work which fully occupied six wires and *twelve* clerks. If the extension to Charing-cross be successful, as there is every



reason to suppose, the tube will take up with ease the work of twelve more clerks.

These pneumatic tubes have been extended by the Post Office to the provincial towns—Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, and Glasgow; and three tubes, one of 1530 yards, and two of 700 yards, will soon be in operation in Dublin, if they are not so already.

So much for the reception of the telegraphic messages, literally on the wings of the wind, as most appropriate to messages which are practically 'flashed like lightning' by electricity—the rival of, if not identical with, the sun's light in its passage through infinite space. Next comes what is called 'the sortation of messages.'

In the Provincial Gallery of the Central Station, and immediately in front of the pneumatic tubes, are the 'sorting' tables, at which the sortation (a new word, but quite admissible to our wonderfully composite language) of the messages going through the mysterious tubes to the delivering stations is effected.

The messages coming through the tubes from the collecting stations, for retransmission by Telegraph-street, have to be retransmitted either to some other part of London, or to some part of the country, or finally abroad.

If they are to be sent to some other part of London, they are sent down to the Metropolitan Gallery. If they are to be sent to America, they are sent to the joint office of the Anglo-American and French Atlantic Companies. If they are to be sent to India, they are sent, in accordance with the directions of their senders, to the Indo-European Company, or the joint office of the British Indian Submarine Company and the Falmouth, Malta, and Gibraltar Company. If they are to be sent to any part of the Continent, except the parts served by the cables of the Great Northern (Danish-Norwegian) Telegraph Company, they are sent to the Submarine Company in Threadneedle-street, who work the cables between this country and France and Belgium, which are their own property, and also those between this country and Norderney, on the coast of Hanover, which are the property of the Post Office. Messages intended for those parts of the Continent which are served by the cables of the Great Northern Telegraph Company are sent to the Newcastle and Edinburgh circuits or telegraphic lines. Messages intended for transmission to some provincial place are sorted to one of the four great divisions in which the provincial circuits have been arranged; that is, the West and South-west of England and the Channel Islands circuits, the East and South-east of England circuits, the North-east and North of England and for Scotland circuits, and the North-west of England, Ireland, and the Isle of Man circuits. Such is the prodigious daily work of the Sortation Department, the amount of whose brainwork and skill may be imagined; and it is most gratifying to find that these important divisions of the

tremendous labour are respectively under the control of *female* clerks, whose names we are proud to record—Miss Hayward, Miss Noakes, Miss Greer, and Miss Ward.

The sorting table for messages coming through the tubes from the collecting offices is subdivided into 'pans,' eight in number. One of these pans, the seventh, is appropriated to messages which are to be delivered from Telegraph-street, or from some one of the offices connected with Telegraph-street by tube.

The eighth pan is in all cases a 'blind' pan, that is, devoted to messages the circulation of which is doubtful. The term 'blind' has been long applied in the Post Office to the sorter who deals with letters of doubtful circulation, or which have been illegibly or imperfectly addressed. A single instance will suffice to convey an idea of the *modus operandi* of the sortation. A message coming from Manchester, for transmission to Exeter, is taken from the Manchester circuits in Miss Ward's division to the sorting table of her division, and sorted to Miss Hayward's division and carried by Miss Hayward's collectors to the Exeter circuits.

Nor is that all. The messages passing in and out of the station are all *recorded and numbered* at the sorting-tables to which they are carried, and an accurate numerical account of them is compiled daily.

Again, at the delivery table an account is kept *from hour to hour* of the number of messages sent out for delivery in each hour; so that the superintendent of the station may see whether the work is progressing at the proper rate.

The greatest number of messages which have as yet passed through this station in one day passed on the 18th July 1870, when the war-panic was at its height, and 20,595 messages passed. Of these nearly 11,000 came in by wire and went out by wire, thus giving rise to two distinct telegraphic operations.

The bulk of the work done at the Central Station consists of the receipt of messages by wire for retransmission by wire. Nearly 300 wire circuits work into and out of the Central Station. Many of these circuits accommodate more than one station; but, on the other hand, many stations, as, for example, Liverpool and Manchester, require much more than one circuit. The result is, that the Central Station is in direct communication with about as many stations as there are circuits working from it; that is, with about 115 metropolitan stations, and about 190 provincial stations.

The circuits are arranged geographically. In addition to this, the circuits serving any one town or district are placed side by side. All the Liverpool circuits are in one room, and all the Charing-cross or all the House of Commons circuits are located together. The advantages of this arrangement are obvious. The clerks in charge can at a glance see whether the wires serving an important town or district are all equally busy, and can make arrangements



for feeding all circuits equally with messages. The geographical arrangement of circuits has been carried out in every large town in the kingdom.

With regard to the telegraphic instruments in use, it appears that the Post Office employs almost every form, if not quite every form, of instrument known to the telegraphic companies; but it has made strenuous efforts to discontinue the use of the less perfect, and to extend the use of the more perfect forms. The Post Office authorities have taken especial pains to extend and improve the working of the Wheatstone automatic instrument. This instrument consists of two parts. By one part, which is called a puncher or perforator, the signals representing the messages are punched out on a ribbon of paper. The punched ribbon is then passed through the other part, which is called the transmitter, and which transmits the signals automatically, and with unerring accuracy, to the other end of the line. The transmitter can work up 180 words a minute; but the punching, which is done by hand, rarely gets beyond a rate of 40 words a minute. Nor could one clerk at the receiving write out, as a general rule, more than 40 words a minute. In order, therefore, to get the full value out of the instrument by equalising the speed of the punchers and writers with that of the transmitters, it is necessary to employ several punchers and writers to every transmitter, to punch the messages in batches by several hands, and to divide the received ribbon among several writers. By these means the transmitters are fed with the required rapidity. Formerly this instrument could only turn out 60 messages per hour on any one circuit; but now, thanks to improvements effected by the officials, it gives from 150 to 160 messages an hour on some circuits.

The staff employed in Telegraph-street throughout the day, that is, from 8 A.M. to 8 P.M., is mainly, though not entirely, a female staff. The companies employed a female staff, but to its credit the Post Office has largely extended the employment of female labour; and according to Mr. Seudamore's very elaborate testimony, it appears most strikingly that not only do women deserve to be thus employed, but that it would be vastly to the advantage of the country if they received preferentially such public employments. All honour to the Post Office authorities for this merited recognition!

In the assimilation of telegraphic codes, instructions, and regulations, the Post Office teachers have otherwise deserved well of the public. In numerous and well-directed schools of telegraphy, open to all applicants duly qualified, they extend the knowledge of our 'liberal' arts, and promote the exertion of tact, ingenuity, and perseverance.

The rapid increase of business may be inferred from the fact that the number of messages forwarded from Postal Telegraph stations in the United Kingdom in the week ending November 11, 1877

was 249,020, showing an increase of 62,463 over the corresponding period of the preceding year.

In spite of all efforts, however, to prevent them, there must be complaints, there must be grumbling. But the complaints against the Postal Telegraph, we are happy to say, are not numerous in proportion to the business done; for if every complaint received by the authorities were well founded, and this, of course, is not the case, there would actually be but one complaint to every 600 messages. The authorities contend that not above one-half of the complaints received by them are well founded as against themselves. In the other half, the fault is proved to be either with railway stations acting for them, or with foreign lines to which the messages are handed over, or, finally, with the public themselves. It appears also that the instrument itself will sometimes commit a blunder on its own account. In signalling, letters are represented by groups of dots and dashes; and if the instrument fails to convey a dot or a dash, as it sometimes will, or substitutes a dot for a dash, or *vice versa*, as it sometimes will, it may materially alter the message, and the result may become provokingly ridiculous. Thus a gentleman telegraphed from London to his brother in the country to send a *hack* to meet him at a station. Now the signal for *h* is *four* dots, and the perversely comical instrument sent only *three* dots, which form the signal for the letter *s*. Consequently, when the gentleman arrived at the station, he found a *sack* waiting for him! In this case, however, if he had asked for a *horse* instead of for a *hack*, the blunder would have been corrected, as the receiving clerk would have been able to make nothing of the word *sorse*.

Again, a firm in London telegraphed, '*Send rails ten foot lengths.*' The signals for *t* and *e* are a dash and a dot, but the instrument sent two dots, which form the signal for *i*; the consequence was that the message was delivered thus: '*Send rails in foot lengths.*' In this case, if the senders had been less chary of their words, and had written, '*Send rails in ten foot lengths,*' which would have cost them no more, the blunder would probably have been corrected.

On this score generally we cannot do better than quote the feeling words of Mr. Scudamore in his valuable Report: 'The public would help themselves and us very much if they more often wrote legibly, if they used only plain words of ordinary acceptation, and if they were careful always to use the full number of words required to give a grammatical construction to their messages. Taking all these things into account, however, I am forced to admit that we do too frequently commit most annoying and irritating blunders. Telegraph clerks do their work in a very mechanical fashion, and too often have little more care for the messages which they are writing out than a compositor has for the phrases which he puts into type.'

ANDREW STEINMETZ.



## LIGHT LITERATURE

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'WRETCHED young man! there you are, reading your novels and trash again. Where do you expect to go to?' Such used to be the withering speech of parents, guardians, and those in authority over us, when I, a schoolboy, after having been buried up to my eyes, and far over my ears, among the dead languages, was striving to get an idea into my head from a book written in a tongue which I really and radically understood; so the novel was secreted, and only the more eagerly read by the light of a furtive candle in bed, and at unholy hours in the morning, when a stern sense of duty should have compelled us, if awake, to be making 'nonsense verses.'

And here, perhaps, I may be allowed to pause a minute, in order to remark on that wonderful system of education—I hope no longer existing—which ordained that, at fixed hours during the week, each boy in a large school should become a temporary poet of nonsense—or, if in a higher class, of sense—verses; the latter, as a rule, being seven degrees (Helicon) lower than the first. If they had said, 'Here is a pair of top-boots: every boy shall make one boot on Tuesday and Friday,' after a time some boys would have become Hobys or 'Burns who wa' in Piccadilly bred; but you can't raise poets like shoemakers—'Poeta nascitur;' and he is a misfit (as the boots above quoted would have been) if he is forced into the perilous and useless trade. But this is a digression, though perhaps this youthful infusion of 'nonsense' may have acted on the system, and, breaking out later in life, have engendered some of the novels of this generation.

On reflection, however, I do not think those 'parents, guardians, and others' were so very wrong in placing novels on the 'Index Expurgatorius.' They spoke after the wisdom of their generation, and their experience of novels and romances must have been depressing. Imagine the trash that was written before Walter Scott; and alas, friend of my youth, who sat on the second volume of *Waverley* (family edition, 5s.) while you gloated over the first, I strongly advise you not to try to read 'Scott's Novels' again, or at least only two or three of them, lest you find yourself yawning in the face of your old favourites. Then imagine reading *Evelina* or *Cecilia*! Picture to yourself being told how 'she came to carry me to Vauxhall in her coach,' about the 'tea equipage,' and 'O, cried she.'

For my own part, I have always swallowed with a grain and a half of salt all the stories about Johnson's 'little character-monger.'

That Sheridan sat up all night to read her is probable, if he read *Evelina* at all; but then Sheridan seldom went to bed. Burke, Windham, Johnson!—'the best novel they ever read'! Then, dear me, how bad the others must have been! Do not, however, for a moment imagine that I am abusing novels or their writers; on the contrary, I think that the whole world is indebted to them. In this terribly practical, material, and over-working age, when men's brains are surcharged with thought, some rest is required; and as no busy brain can rest except in sleep, what is better for it than the mild excitement of a good—not a super-sensational—novel. Blessings on Bernhard Tauchnitz! say I, though I think it just possible that English authors will hardly echo that prayer; and indeed it is hard on them that I should have a library of all the best English novels, extremely well bound, at a cost of 2s. a volume. Of course these books are 'exiles from the land of their birth,' like General Garibaldi, but they are very nice to residents and travellers abroad. Besides, if vol. ii. disappoints you, you can throw it out of the train unbound; and your revenge on the deceptive *author*—or *ess*, as the case may be—only costs '½ Thlr.'

It is impossible to exaggerate the debt of gratitude due, by any one who is a long traveller or a bad sleeper, to another of his species who plunges into the inkstand, and comes out dripping with a novel in his hand. Talk of *Venus orta mare*! I wish to say nothing disrespectful of her, as she is a woman, but she may 'go to Bath' again, if so minded, as far as I am concerned. Give me my intellectual diver, and the pearl which he fishes out of the Black Sea. What hours in bed and in train have I passed in romance land during the last ten years! With the candles and the 'midnight oil' burned by me alone, chiefly in personal railway lamps (and I wish they would make their hooks better and their glass clearer), a limited company might have existed, and paid, say, one dividend. *A propos* of this—and even very *à propos*—I must again digress for a few lines. I believe you should never let a good action pass unnoticed. I was drearily travelling, on a miserably wet black night, in a special train through Hungary. By day the road is beautiful and interesting—*je ne dis pas non*; but at night it is as black as a wolf's throat. You hardly ever stop, and there are no regular stations. I was just thinking how lucky I was, wrapped up in fur like a well-dressed bear, with some biscuits, a bottle of Tokayer Wein, brought to the train for me by one Pulszky, the grower of it,—of whom, as he is only the cleverest man in Europe, you, my dear reader, most likely have never heard,—and, last but not least, a novel. The light was as that of other railways—darkness visible; still, with 'a great deal of the best will,' one could read, and we got on till, *crac*! something happened, and the lamp went out. 'We sha'n't get another,' pleasantly remarked a companion. So we sat in



the dark; *Kenelm Chillingly* fell from my grasp; I ate a biscuit, drank a glass of Tokay, and wept.

Presently we stayed at a station for a minute, and out of the darkness came a kindly voice, which said: 'Old friend, I have brought you a candle. *Fiat lux!*' It was General Türr, who, unseen himself, had seen my misery; and here to that Lucifer, pride of midnight, I return my thanks. But you will say: 'This has nothing to do with light literature.' *Sì scusi, signore*; it had at least much to do with mine.

But let us return to our muttons—black sheep indeed, according to our elders. I say that the civilised world is deeply indebted to novel-writers. If a man writes a novel, he is clever; if he writes a good novel, he is cleverer; and if he writes a first-rate novel, he is cleverest; but even to the positive we owe a great debt of gratitude. As a rule, too, the novels are good; but still I cannot help thinking that, with a very little more trouble, they might be so much better. 'Praise the works of Pietro Perugino, and say the pictures would have been better if the painter had taken more pains:' that was a bishop's charge; and I say a little 'more pains' would save most of our novelists from making blunders which would be terrible if they were not so amusing.

And now I beg to state that I am not going to abuse anybody personally, and indeed I could not if I would; for, with two or three exceptions, the writers of these novels are as mythical to me as the characters they produce; all I know is, that I am much indebted to them. The two or three writers of fiction whom I have the pleasure of knowing are capital fellows, and so, I have no doubt, are all the rest; still, I think they make mistakes. Jealous of them? Of course I am of the very smallest of them—sincerely jealous; but I hope I shall not show it.

To begin with then, and speaking merely as the mildest but still most 'constant reader,' would it not be possible for these writers of fiction to confine themselves a little more to fact as far as habits and customs, men, women, and children, are concerned? Their plots are their own, and they have a right to do with them as they like: pour in the lightning, ram home the thunderbolts, give the word 'Fire!' and blow us out of our seven senses—that is *whist*; a bold game, but still 'whist.' Let the *dramatis personæ* be women or ladies, men or gentlemen, as the case requires; but let them be, do, and suffer as we daily see women and ladies, men and gentlemen, exist and act and endure. We live at a most unpleasantly practical period; that is the fact. 'The age of ruins is past: have you seen Manchester?' asks Sidonia of Coningsby, and the few words well describe our age. I may prefer the ruins to Manchester, but the world does not; and also the world likes a spade to be called a spade, not an 'agricultural implement.'

The realistic school should be that of modern novels; but it is not. Surely Scott's best novels are *Waverley*, *Guy Mannering*, and the *Antiquary*—and why? Simply because they take us among our fellow men; our grandfathers might have been at school with them. I confess that when I get to chivalry, misty and mysterious maidens, and Yellow Dwarfs, I am lost. My only idea of chivalry is a damp tournament at Eglington Castle; I don't think I ever saw anything nearer to a 'maid of the mist' than a girl in a fog; and the only 'Yellow Dwarf' I ever heard of as a reality was Lord Waterford's steeplechase horse of that name. But Scott wrote a long time ago, and let us hope what he told us *was* all true. 'Se non è vero era ben trovato,' and that is always a point gained. Let us come nearer home. I should be almost afraid to say how many days of my life I have spent in reading the works of Dickens; if I am left in a room with one now for a quarter of an hour, I am at him at once; and I hope to continue to read them while I read anything, though actually I can say that I know them by heart; still you know nobody ever saw (except perhaps Squeers and the Brothers Cheerybles in a mitigated form) any living being the least like any of Dickens's characters. What fun the world would be if there were any Pickwicks and Jingles and Winkles! But there never were nor will be; more's the pity. Mrs. Gamp and Mrs. Nickleby are the only characters that could have been traced to an origin, and it is to be hoped that the type of the first is worn out before now.

No; dear as is Dickens to me, he could no more describe men as they are than he could describe the country; he drew wonderful caricatures, whereas Thackeray photographed.

What a wonderful man was Lord Lytton! After writing a perfect series of novels in one style, he rested a little, and then came out in a new form with novels as superior to all but one of his earlier production as Byron was to 'Hafiz.' But, then, ask yourself, my most critical reader, and answer truly, were not the best works of the Lord of Knebworth those in which he described real live men and women? *Pelham*, for instance; you may dislike the dandy if you please, but ask your father, and he will tell you that it was a faithful type of a class. *Devereux*, and then those glorious everyday books, the *Caxtons*, *My Novel*, and *What will he do with it?* Where would you 'place' *Zanoni*, *Lucretia*, or *Paul Clifford* in such a race?

For my own part, I believe it was the creed of my childhood, as it is now, that *Pelham* was and is the best novel that ever was written; that it made an impression is evident, for it was the first novel I ever perused, and that was before I had even been to a private school, and I can yet describe the exact spot where I read it, though I have not seen it for years. I was sitting on a green garden-stool under a tree in the shrubbery just opposite the door at



Havering. By the bye, there must have been one or two good novels then; for once having tasted blood, I took to that 'pernicious literature,' and I remember *Hyde Nugent*, in which a late 'saint,' who later drove a coach to Brighton, and was in fact a man of an age, was a principal figure, and also *Almack's*. I have never seen them since, but I would read them again, and if any reader of the *Belgravia* will send me a copy of them, I will mention her or his name in my will. Can any one say fairer than that?

Do writers as a rule improve as they write on? My impression is that as a rule they do not. See how many first novels have been the best. Miss Burney never beat *Evelina*; *Waverley* is certainly the best of Scott's lot; *Pelham* was never surpassed by its author even in his later brilliant works; *Pickwick* and Dickens will live together; *Vanity Fair* is the glory of Thackeray, though I confess to a great weakness for *Esmond*; *Coningsby*, a book of a peculiar school, and written *avec intention*, was never quite equalled by its brilliant author; Whyte-Melville will never surpass *Digby Grand*, or Lawrence produce another *Guy Livingstone*.

Ah, those novels of Mr. Disraeli's; take from them the extraneous elements of politics and poetry, which latter he cannot help writing even in prose, and what vivid scenes of actual life are spread before you! *Voilà un qui a vécu*. I suppose no other author could have written that scene at Crockford's the night before the Derby. It is life, and that is what this practical age requires in works of imagination. Altogether, however, it seems to me we have lately had among us the 'Eclipse' of novel-writers—Thackeray. If I had to be limited for life to one author, I should choose him, and be contented. He does not sketch or invent, or at least his invention is like a photograph. We may be struck by the poetic ideas of Smith, in love with the glowing scenes of oriental Brown, or deeply interested in Professor Robinson's *Travels from Nowhere to Somewhere else*, two vols., dedicated to the Bishop of Phantasmagoria; that is well and as it should be, but we do not, all or any of us, always wish to be perpetually excited, awed, or instructed.

*Pas si bête!* civilised man wishes to be amused. Now we take hold of Thackeray's arm, and he walks us through the life which is ours. He dines at the houses we dine at; knows all the fellows at the clubs, meets you at the balls, goes to Spratt's, and has all the news for you in the bow window of Bays' next morning, and he never makes a mistake. Now I prefer this to hearing about the Last either of the Tribunes or the Mohicans.

Yes; Thackeray is my photographer, and I should humbly submit the best novel-writer of the century. To Mr. Trollope the world must be infinitely obliged. What days of good reading he affords! and he is, I should say, true to life enough to satisfy the most material man, but he will draw one class—he draws it to

the life, with one exception; he is never dull. I should think the life he describes *was*—very often.

A cathedral town is not big enough for Mr. Trollope. To use a metaphor which he will understand as well as any one, and I hope excuse, I should like to 'take him out of the plough into the grass.' But you see all his characters talk and act like men and women of 18—; they don't go stalking on stilts over dry ground.

Mrs. Wood is no doubt a realist, but then small-town life is so very real that one wishes her in a large metropolis: the author of the *Channings* and *Mrs. Halliburton* is worthy of a large field. After reading one of this lady's healthy downright stories, try that sickly mixture of sentiment and sensation concocted by the author of *Abbot's Cleve* and of that other equally vapid and similarly forgotten novel *Carleton Grange*, and discover the difference between the popular story-teller and her obscure imitator. I was led into making this discovery by a fulsome notice in the *Saturday Review*, in which the critic lavishly exhausted his vocabulary of praise upon what turned out to be the silliest imitation of a popular novelist that ever fell, as it deserved to fall, still-born from the press. I felt curious to know what relationship the author of *Abbot's Cleve* had to the reviewer and to the immaculate journal in which the review appeared. Perhaps Mr. James Grant, who has just issued a supplement\* to his elaborate work on the *Newspaper Press*, or Mr. John Timbs, author of *Things not generally Known*, may let out the secret. Then we shall all learn how it is that literary abortions are lauded, while really clever works of fiction are libelled, in the *Saturday Review*.

Mr. Edmund Yates writes like a gentleman about ladies and gentlemen, and tells us what living people do. That is the essence of modern romance. We do not want the *Loves of Angels* or the *Lives of Saints*—no, I prefer *Black Sheep*.

There is no occasion to speak of the *Seven Sons of Mammon*. They are the seven sons of X. the banker or Y. the director, with whom we so often dine; but this is only natural. I believe, if Mr. G. A. Sala wished to describe a pre-Adamite fancy-fair, he would do it, and describe all the ladies' dresses (*halte-là!* was there a pre-Wirth), the stalls, and chaotic goods they sold. I love those seven sons as I do Mammon.

*Tom Brown* is a good book as long as it sticks to Rugby. When it gets transcendental, it is so unlike the Rugby of my time that I pause and admire. A sainted schoolboy must be, to quote Mr. Squeers, like Nature, 'a holy thing;' but then, to follow out the quotation, he must also be 'a rum un.'

\* *The Saturday Review, its Origin and Progress, its Contributors and Character. With Illustrations of the Mode in which it is Conducted.* Darton and Co., 42 Paternoster-row.



I have reserved, almost for the last, two especial favourites, two writers who tell of the life which they lived, of the people whom they knew—Whyte-Melville and Guy Livingstone. It seems to me that they alone now draw pictures of that life which is so amusing to the 'frivolous'—let us call him 'frivolous'—reader of to-day who wishes something to interest and amuse him, take off his attention from the House, the settling-day, or the family law-suits, and calm down his mind after breakfast and before sleep.

When *Digby Grand* first appeared, I remember a man sitting at breakfast in a hunting-box—by the way, he was in Guy Livingstone's regiment—reading the last thing out. I had finished it in bed, and said how good I thought it. 'Bosh!' said Henry C—. 'What's the use of reading the stuff? I know all the fellows and all about them.' I think no greater compliment could be paid to an author. If Whyte-Melville had written only the introduction to *Homeby House*, and the letters at the beginning of the *Interpreter*, he would have taken a first-class degree among the describers of the true. Commonplace people, most of his characters! True; but then, *amica mea*, the world is very much made up of such cattle.

What shall I say of Guy Livingstone? What Henry C— said of his brother officers. Yes; any man of the standing of the author 'knows all his characters at home.'

The worst of Guy Livingstone's friends is that they are too strong, a deal too clever, and a turn too aristocratic for this workaday age; but none of these writers go wrong, much less perpetrate outrageous errors, at which the writer himself must roar if ever he reads over his own production. I hate to see clever people make feeble errors.

I can scarcely call feeble the errors into which the writer—the last I shall have the audacity to criticise—falls every three or four pages. But pause. Who, what, or where, is Ouida? Is it a literary society, like *feu Homère*? is it three gentlemen in one, like the dog of Mrs. Malaprop? or is it a joint-stock company, limited, without the least power to add to its numbers? I am inclined to believe the last. I should say original shareholders have taken half; Melville, W., 1 share; Livingstone, G., 1 share; *Morning Post*, 2 shares; servants' hall, 5 shares; *Newgate Calendar*, 1 share; Dumas junior, 1 share; police-court (use of detectives), 5 shares; and so the company is made up. (Names are sometimes used without authority.)

Now as far as reading them goes, these 'real romances' are charming, always save *Idalia*, which is as mad as Bedlam. It is worth buying them to live for a few hours in that atmosphere of perfumed hair, nectarines, Rhine wines, narghellites, with buckets of rose-water, roses, lilies, daffadowndillies, and sweetmeats; to sit in a society all wit and beauty. As you can't do it in life, buy Tauchnitz, I say. The books are charming, though I think *Puc*

better fitted for a smoking-room than 'my lady's chamber.' But why, when he, she, it, they, or the limited company, can write so well, do they write such nonsense? Time, space, season, night and day, are often blended together like a servant's salad (always dress your own); characters are taken away and given again. There are battles, murders, sudden deaths, and picnics—why not?—betrayal, banquets and bouquets of flowers and pheasants, and again, *pourquoi non?* All this is the affair of the author, and comes, as they say in Government offices, 'in their department.' But why not let the people in novels of to-day talk, eat, drink, as our people do?

I will give a few instances. A sportsman, 'only expecting to shoot snipe,' does not go out armed with a rifle with which he kills 'a border eagle,' neither does he fish armed with the same weapon. It does not require many *drags* to take a party of eight from Sunning Hill to the Ascot grand-stand. Neither do I see why the *chef de cuisine* came every day 'in his little brown brougham' to superintend his master's dinners. Where the d— did he come from, and why the d— did he not stay on the spot? Stay and look after the breakfast, *allez donc!* Hock is not usually drunk after dinner, neither is it often found in little cottages in Vallambrosa. Men seldom 'play at baccaret' before breakfast, except indeed in the sense that they have been at it all night. If you know a Queen's Messenger—I do many, I am happy to say—ask him if he takes many 'specials,' and goes from the embassy to the station at 2 A.M. 'in a bed carriage.'

I could go on for a month, but I will merely say that I do not believe that *Idalia* is founded on fact. If I thought so, I should 'rise in my place,' and ask leave to submit a question: 'Is Sir Fulke Erceldoune still on the list, and is he, as a Greek prince, still a Queen's Messenger?' I should give notice on a Monday.

But I don't believe the story. Why, mark this, as Wilson Croker used to say, this was in '60. I was at Naples at the time. I was close to the spot where these startling events happened, and, sir, as an English representative, I should have required—

But I will finish seriously. Why write nonsense when you can write wit? why take scenes and days open to 'return tickets'? I was there on the spot at the time, and so were some score of other English. Why, I say, throw such talent to the winds? If you are a poet, write poetry, and let those who like read; but if you write prose, write up to truth and down to the level of our poor prosaic intellects. Yet I wish I had never read one line of Ouida's writing, so should I have it all yet to read.

Probably it is impertinent to criticise as I have done, yet I am one of the many, the readers; and finding no fault with any writer, I only wish to state my opinion that in fiction and description 'truth is great, and will prevail.'

F. M. W.



## ROOKS AND ROOK-SHOOTING

THE man that hath not tasted of rook-pie is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils, and should not be trusted to pass an opinion, as an authority, upon the dainty dishes fit to set before a king. Pigeon-pie is very good, and much patronised by connoisseurs of culinary delicacies, but it is not to be compared with that manufactured out of rook's flesh, provided the cook understands his business, and the sportsman has taken the precaution to wring the birds' heads off before putting the fruits of his prowess into his game-bag. By omitting this operation the savoury nature of the forthcoming pie may be seriously endangered, if not utterly spoiled; and this is the case also with starlings, birds which make an excellent pie if their heads be wrung off immediately they are shot. I am not qualified to give instructions for the manufacture of a rook-pie, though I flatter myself I can render a good account of one when placed before me after a day's shooting. There are varieties of other condiments necessary for its perfect palatableness, I am well aware, such as bacon, parsley, cream, and other things *quæ nunc perscribere longum sit*, but to give an exact and complete list of them is quite beyond my capabilities and knowledge. They say the devil looks over Lincoln, and it is a saying in the West of England that his Satanic Majesty has never visited Cornwall from a fear of being put into a pie. Everything goes into a pie there, from hippopotamus to conger-eel; but it must be remembered that the 'trimmings,' or extra ingredients, are so numerous and so influential in the concoction of west-country pie, that the original flavour of the principal article becomes so disguised that none but an experienced devourer and patroniser of pies can tell whether he is eating fish, flesh, fowl, or good red-herring. The Cornish housewife is inimitable and unapproachable as a maker of pies, and nothing that can be put under a crust comes amiss to her, provided always that she has the all-important ingredient of clotted cream at her command. Without this she is but as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal, but with it a paragon of culinary excellence.

The slaughterers of pigeons might forego during the month of May, at all events, the pleasures of their favourite amusement, and exchange the delights of Hurlingham and Shepherd's Bush for some profitable ruralising among the rookeries of this pleasant country. They can give no substantial or plausible reason for their persistent attacks upon the doves, and they but invoke the castigation of the press and the general public by the exhibition of their skill in shooting the harmless and defenceless pigeon; but in shooting rooks they

may exhibit an equal skill, and at the same time be benefiting themselves and conferring a favour upon the farmer. For your rook proper is a most unconscionable rascal, and will rob any and every thing he can find in his way. This is a peculiarity among rooks which is deserving of the utmost condemnation, and forms a fine excuse, if such were needed, for their occasional destruction. Not content with preying upon mankind to an infinite extent, and being indeed almost entirely dependent upon man and man's substance for their daily food, they will actually rob one another when opportunity permits, without the smallest scruple or hesitation. The quarrel-someness of their disposition is also highly objectionable; but it must be allowed that when they are unexpectedly invaded by the foe, no matter in what numbers, they unite immediately for the general defence of their entire colony and homes, and then woe betide the 'Johnny Newcomes' who have the temerity to dare them forth to battle. But then, again, in strict justice it must be said that very fierce contentions often arise among themselves from what, I am sure, would be considered among ourselves as very slight provocation.

But the rooks are not without their uses, and by their destruction of insects and worms, if they are not allowed to become too numerous, do a great deal more of good than of harm to the agriculturist. Popular feeling was very strongly against them in ancient times, and their destruction, according to Stanley, was both regular and systematic. We need go no farther than Blackheath to see what mischief to vegetation may be wrought by the wire-worms; and the rooks are specially fond of devouring this pest of the farmer. 'The wire-worm is one of the greatest nuisances to which the farmers are exposed, and yet it is to the rooks chiefly, if not entirely, that they can look for a remedy. Cased in its hard shelly coat, it eats its way into the heart of the roots of corn, and is beyond the reach of weather, or the attacks of other insects or small birds, whose short and soft bills cannot penetrate the recesses of its secure retreat, buried some inches below the soil. The rook alone can do so; if watched, when feeding in a field of spreading wheat, the heedless observer will abuse him when he sees him poking up root after root of the rising crop; but the careful observer will, if he examines minutely, detect in many of these roots the cell of a wire-worm, in its silent and underground progress inflicting death on stems of many future grains.'

But it is certain that, whatever argument may be adduced by their apologists in favour of their general utility to the farmer, and of the desirability of encouraging their breed in every way, if they did not undergo the annual raid in the spring months, they would soon so greatly increase in numbers as to become an intolerable nuisance. A rookery near a dwelling is undoubtedly a great acquisition, and the pleasant cawing of the birds confers a cheerfulness and general joyousness which no one would wish to dispense with.



It is in the month of March when the rooks set about the great business of building their nests, and then it is that those of the former year that have survived the storms of winter are repaired with much care and diligence. The new nests are, for the most part, added to the general stock by the young birds of the previous year. The nest is manufactured of 'large sticks, cemented with clay, mixed with tufts of grass, and is lined with roots. The eggs, four or five in number, are of a pale-green ground colour, blotched over with darker and lighter patches of yellowish and greenish brown; they vary much.' By the middle of May, or at all events by the beginning of June, the young birds are fledged, and it is said that second broods are sometimes produced as late as November. The shooting commences as soon as the young birds are able to leave the nest, and although it would be more sportsmanlike to shoot them only when strong enough to be on the wing, I fear that consideration does not universally weigh much among modern devotees of the sport. Sport, indeed, rook-shooting can scarcely be called, and yet it is a pleasant out-door amusement enough, as all who have enjoyed it will readily testify; though it must be confessed that the perpetual star-gazing attitude of looking skyward for your game is calculated sometimes to cause giddiness and a 'crick' of your neck.

Before the young are hatched, the male bird sits alternately with the female upon the eggs, and roams abroad in quest of food only when his bride does not need to do so. This is an amicable domestic arrangement on the part of the rooks which is worthy of remark, and might be not unprofitably followed by some members of the human family. And this fostering care of the young does not end here; for after the birds are hatched, and have ventured forth from the nest, they may be observed sitting about its edge, awaiting in apparent unconcern the approach of their parent with their necessary food.

The rook-shooting season commences, as before stated, as soon as the young birds are observed about the trees, and are popped in every conceivable manner, 'with crossbow, boltbow, and arrow. But this cannot fairly be termed legitimate shooting; and as the bird soon gathers sufficient strength to be on the wing—so visibly, indeed, that in a very few days they may be observed hopping and flitting about from branch to branch—they may well be waited for until the shooting of them can claim some sort of merit. Besides, there is this danger in shooting rooks on the branch of a tree, that they sometimes 'die hard,' and, by driving their claws into the bark, will perish in that condition, and never find their way into your game-bag at all. There is no excuse for the sportsman's shooting an old bird when any particularly wide-awake member of the feathered tribe comes within gunshot range. He generally keeps circling about high in air, or takes himself off altogether; for the young birds may always be distinguished from the old ones, both by the peculiarities

of their 'caw' as well as by their greater squareness of tail. But the shooting of an old rook is a very rare occurrence; and when a raid is made upon their colony, they exercise a wise discretion in keeping out of harm's way as much as possible.

There are differences of opinion as to the best gun or other instrument to be used in rook-shooting, but there can be no doubt that the Rook and Rabbit Rifle made for the gun-trade by Messrs. W. and C. Scott and Son, of Birmingham, is emphatically the best for the purpose. With this weapon the general sportsman may have most useful rifle-practice. 'They are assailed,' says Blaine, 'with the crossbow, the boltbow, or with the bow and arrow, which, making little disturbance, does not injure the rookery, and finds practice for the younger as well as more experienced sportsman. The air-gun still finds favour in some eyes, but it requires caution and much experience in the user.' But these remarks were written many years ago, and it must be remembered that these instruments of destruction were principally employed in firing at the sitting birds.

In the *Every-Day Book* there is a curious account of the London rooks as follows: 'Some years ago there were several large elm-trees in the college garden behind the Ecclesiastical Court, Doctors' Commons, in which a number of rooks had taken up their abode, forming in appearance a sort of convocation of aerial ecclesiastics. A young gentleman who lodged in an attic, and was their close neighbour, frequently entertained himself with thinning this covey of black game by means of a crossbow. On the opposite side lived a curious old civilian, who observing from his study that the rooks often dropped senseless from their perch—or, as it may be said, without using a figure, "hopped the twig," making no sign, nor any sign being made to his vision to account for the phenomenon—set his wits to work to consider the cause. It was probably during a profitless time of peace, and the doctor, having plenty of leisure, weighed the matter over and over, till he was at length fully satisfied that he had made a great ornithological discovery, that its promulgation would give wings to his fame, and that he was fated, by means of these rooks, to say,

"Volito vivus per ora virum."

His goosequill and foolscap were quickly in requisition, and he actually wrote a treatise, stating circumstantially what he himself had seen, and in conclusion giving it as the settled conviction of his mind that rooks were subject to the falling sickness.'

Certainly rook-shooting is a very enjoyable diversion, and to be a member of a rook-shooting party, where the birds are very plentiful, is always an agreeable manner of spending a day. And the pleasure of discussing the pie is enhanced, when its contents are the produce of one's own prowess or that of one's friends.

It is advisable in rook-shooting—a pastime in which considerable quantities of birds are sometimes shot—to provide yourself with a



capacious sack or a particularly well-lined game-bag. It is by no means necessary that you should carry it yourself, or that you should incommode the free action of your limbs with such an accoutrement; but it will be found serviceable at the end of the day, and is much better as a deposit for dead rooks than the pockets of your coat, supposing them to be sufficiently capacious for your necessities. Experienced rook-shooters take very good care not to put their game into their coat-pockets. 'The burnt child fears the fire;' and the rook-shooter who has once been guilty of the folly of pocketing rooks is not likely again to commit so egregious an error. If you should do so, you may, on your return home from your shooting, become unpleasantly aware of the presence of innumerable small insects, which are by no means popular and very decidedly troublesome.

I might give any number of anecdotes about the sagacity of the rooks, and make this paper extend to any length. They would perhaps be highly instructive as well as amusing, but would hardly be appropriate to the pages of a magazine. The great charm of rook-shooting is, that its enjoyment does not entail the expense of a game certificate; and as there are many rookeries in the country, almost any man of ordinary respectability may be able to have a day's rook-shooting during the season. Of course rooks are not game, but rook-shooting comes fairly under the catalogue of field sports. 'The plan now proposed,' says Sydney Smith, 'is to undersell the poacher, which may be successful or unsuccessful; but the threat is, if you attempt this plan there will be no game; and if there is no game, there will be no country gentlemen. We deny every part of this enthymeme; the last proposition as well as the first. We really cannot believe that all our country mansions would be deserted, although no game was to be found in their neighbourhood. Some come into the country for health, some for quiet, for agriculture, for economy, from attachment to family estates, from love of retirement, from the necessity of keeping up provincial interests, and from a vast variety of causes. Partridges and pheasants, though they form nine-tenths of human motives, still leave a small residue, which may be classed under some other head.'

Many years ago the rooks at Treworrey, near Liskeard in Cornwall, grew to such an alarming state of prosperity that a general raid was instituted for their wholesale destruction, and free permission was given to the sportsmen of that consistently liberal little town to enjoy a thorough day's shooting at them. They accepted the invitation *con amore*, and, not content with shooting whole sacks full of the rooks, these ruffians wound up their day's pleasure by firing off their remaining stock of powder and shot at the nests in the deer-park. So effectually did they riddle the branches of the trees and destroy the nests, that not a single rook has ever been tempted to build in those trees since.

SIRIUS.

## THE RED LANCER

BY ALBANY DE FONBLANQUE, AUTHOR OF 'THE TANGLED SKEIN,' ETC.

### CHAPTER I.

'O ladies, beware of a false young knight  
Who loves, and he rides away.'

'CAN you give me ten minutes in my room, Fanny dear, before you dress for dinner?'

'Gracious, child! how you startle one! So like poor mamma. Her very tone. Don't you remember that we had always to "give her ten minutes" when we were to be scolded?'

'I don't think I ever arrived at that dignity. You forget that I was hardly out of the nursery when poor mamma died. I was always scolded on the spot.'

'Much the more satisfactory plan for both sides. It spares the victim the agonies of suspense, and it does not allow the grievance to cool. Scold me at once, Gerty, and have it over.'

'Scold you; I could scarcely do that. I only want to speak to you seriously about something.'

'A distinction without a difference. Children are "scolded" and grown people spoken to "seriously;" but it comes to the same thing. There is even a way of putting grown people in the corner if one only knows how. Go on, dearie, I'm ready.' And the speaker folded her pretty arms, and looked so absurdly demure, that 'speaking seriously' was out of the question.

They were sisters, these two fair women, who stood in the recess of an oriel window, whilst the red sun went down one breezy autumn day in the old country. It was not so long ago, as it seemed to the elder, since little Gerty had cried to be let sit up and see her in her ball dress; and now the whilom 'little Gerty' (born Clanvyse) was a wife and a mother, and chaperoned Lady Fanny (still Clanvyse) to those festive gatherings of which she was still an ornament, though not disqualified, according to the dismal classic decree, from dancing attendance in a warmer climate upon those animals whose antics sometimes amuse us at the Zoo. Lady Gerty, whom that fair domain called mistress, as far as eye could see, was not to be compared in physical beauty to her sister; but O, the perversity of man! She was snapped up in her very first season by the best parti in the county, though he was a commoner; and here she was, told to 'go on,' and 'speak seriously' to her dead father's elder child.

Was it the fault of us 'lords of the creation,' as we call our-



selves, that Lady Fanny remained unwedded? Truth to tell, it was not. She had refused two very promising offers, and she had suffered herself to be led into a most unpromising flirtation, the results of which are to be recorded in these pages. A man who, as the story went, had been struck out of his father's will, who had undoubtedly quarrelled with his elder brother, who possessed four hundred a year beside his pay as a captain of Lancers, spent two thousand, and owed twenty, cannot be said to be otherwise than supremely 'detached mental' when the lady from whom he has kept off all other suitors has her face for her fortune. And it was for such a man that Lady Fanny Clanvyse had remained Lady Fanny Clanvyse for four seasons.

There had been no engagement—nothing that the parties most interested considered as anything like an engagement. The Red Lancer hated ladies' society as a rule, but he rode with Lady Fanny in the Row, and with no one else. He hated balls and dancing as a rule; but he would drop in after supper, and whirl her off in a gallop to the disgust of abandoned partners. And he danced with no one else. There was not much in this, but it set people talking; and when people talk, you know what follows. Lady Fanny was foolish enough, but not half so foolish as her friends made her out to be. Had they known what passed in a certain dimly-lit conservatory where the air was heavy with the aroma of flowers, and the silence made musical by the plash of a hidden fountain; where, heaven knows how, those ungloved hands met; where for one mad, happy moment he drew her to his side, and the touch of lips thrilled them both to the heart's core—there would have been an awful scandal, but no one was there to tell.

Was the Red Lancer a scoundrel? I never was good at ethics, and decline to argue the point from what is, no doubt, the proper point of view. D'Arcy Melville was one of those men who are morally incapable of saying 'no' to a friend, or of *thinking* 'no' to themselves when it would deny them a pleasure. He had no more hesitation of marrying Lady Fanny than he had of paying his debts; but had he known that the moment in which he pressed that golden head to his bosom, and touched those trembling lips, must be his last on earth, he would not have drawn back. The spell was on him, but it was the spell of passion. Let us do him this justice. If you know that a man can become weak and tender at the touch of a half-yielding hand, and lose in the soft contact all that is gross in man's nature, reverencing what he makes his own, you can understand what he means. If you do not, it is no earthly use my attempting to explain. This for male creatures. To women I say nil. They will feel for poor Lady Fanny in their hearts, though of course wild horses would not tear from them a public avowal that a lady who was kissed in a conservatory by one who was not to be her husband could be anything but 'dreadful' in the highest degree.

When Lady Fanny woke next morning, and realised that it was not a dream, she was very happy. D'Arcy Melville paced his room all night, and slept not. His elder brother, a delicate boy, had been kept at home and toadied, whilst he went to a public school and was bullied. They never got on together. They had nothing in common, not even their parents' love; for D'Arcy, the handsome scapegrace, was the darling of both. And he would have been well-to-do in the world—extravagant as he was—but for an alteration in a codicil, intended only to alter an unimportant legacy, but which had the effect of revoking the will. Hence the amiable story that his father had disinherited him. No one intimate with the truth supposed that the new Sir Claud Melville would shirk the well-known wishes of his sire; and indeed he made up his little narrow mind to fulfil them, but he expressed his intention in such offensive terms, and made it dependent upon such unbrotherly conditions, that the Red Lancer threw his letter into the fire, and left it unanswered. This was before the conservatory scene we wot of; and one of the first thoughts that crossed D'Arcy's troubled brain as he paced his room that night was, that he had been a fool. Ah, dear ones, so it is! For you, the first kiss of love opens happy vistas of what you *will be*. For us, too often it raises the veil of the past, and bitter memories of what we *have been* mock us amidst its thrills.

What could a Red Lancer with four hundred a year, and owing twenty thousand, do? Go to the altar *via* the Bankruptcy Court, and take a ten-roomed house in Camberwell? Hardly. Write to Lady Fanny, and say that it was all a mistake? Hardly. Brave it out, and rely upon the common sense of her family to supply an excuse for retreat? No. He loved her, and with all his faults he was a man. He had not many ideas, and the first and the last was to do that before Lady Fanny which he would have scorned to do before an army in position—viz. to run away, and leave things to come to rights somehow. He had great faith in things coming right somehow. Once he had lost eleven thousand upon a Derby, and pulled it all back on the Ascot Cup. 'Double your stake and go on,' had been his maxim on many a board of green cloth, and his luck had turned. *How* things were to come right about Lady Fanny, he did not stop to inquire.

He was one of her Majesty's hard bargains, this Red Lancer. He passed most of his time on leave. There were some who pretended that the regiment did not degenerate during his repeated absences. They were jealous of the favours he received, perhaps. He got six months, and left for Norway in the yacht of his friend Watt Severn. Before he had caught his tenth salmon, the fashionable world was informed through its favourite organ that a marriage was on the tapis between the Marquis of Weybridge and Lady Fanny Clanvyse, the lovely and accomplished daughter of the late Earl Bridgetown.



Now, when a gentleman is told that his lady loves and will marry him, it is not, I am given to understand, unusual for some such passage as took place in that dim conservatory between Lady Fanny and the Red Lancer to follow. Sometimes the two operations are performed simultaneously; and there are even instances in which their order is reversed without offence. But for a gentleman to love and run away! Fie upon him! If he had called next day, made a clean breast of his position, and asked poor Fanny to forgive and forget him, he would have been forgiven; but it would have cost him a hard struggle to forget. As it was, the course of true love runs smooth with the noble Marquis, as it should run with a man of thirty and twenty, who had a castle in Scotland, a park in the shires, a place in Wales, a mansion in Belgrave-square, and about fifty pounds a waking hour to spend. It ran with the Red Lancer—well, as *it should* run with a man who runs away.

Having made these necessary explanations, return we to our two ladies. It is not so easy to 'speak seriously' to your elder sister even when she tells you she is ready. Gerty was rather taken aback. She preferred to have it out, as she first proposed, in her room; in the first place, because she had not made up her mind how to begin, and in the second, because baby was there. Baby, the crown of her matronhood, would help her to be serious. In presence of that morsel of humanity, half smothered in lace and pink flannel, Gerty could feel like a general dictating terms at the head of a victorious army. But Fanny knew the advantage of fighting upon neutral ground, and declined the combat otherwise than at the present time and place. Then Gerty told her that the Red Lancer had not come back and rejoined his regiment at the town, not ten miles distant, but that her (Gerty's) husband, who knew about as much of London scandal as a foxhound, had invited him to shoot next week, and, 'O Fanny dear,' she said, 'if there was anything between you that could make Weybridge unhappy, confide in me, and let me see what can be done.'

'There was not anything, as you call it, between us.'

'Fanny, when I told you he had returned, you went deadly pale, and now your cheeks are burning. Truth, Fanny, truth; you look like—you did love D'Arcy Melville once?'

'Well, I did—there!'

'Then there is one of two things to be done. I must either get Philip to put him off, or you must go to the Thraytons; they know they have been boring you to visit them.'

'You dear serious old Gerty, with your "one of two things"—don't you see that there is what those dreadful people in Parliament call a *third course*, which is to stand my ground, and let this bold *sabreur* see that whatever I was foolish enough to think of him

am cured now. We shall have to meet sooner or later, and it is just as well to bell the cat at once.'

'Fanny, Fanny, you are imprudent!'

'Gerty, Gerty, you are a goose!'

If baby had been there, Gerty would have resented being called a goose.

'Besides,' continued the elder sister, 'only consider what the man would think if I am to shirk him; putting him off is out of the question, as that would involve telling Philip.'

'You haven't a better friend in the world than my husband,' said Gerty proudly.

'I know, dear; but you must admit that in such a case as this he would act like an amiable bull in a china-shop, and bring us all to grief, with the kindest and best intentions.'

And indeed discretion was not one of Philip Bouchier's many virtues. Big of heart as he was stalwart of body, there would have been trouble with the Red Lancer had he known one-half his misdeeds, and this would have been sadly compromising to his sister-in-law.

'Have you told Weybridge?' asked the defeated one, after a pause.

'Told him what?'

'Why, that there was—that you and Captain Melville—you know what I mean, Fanny, so don't try to put me out by looking so absurdly innocent.'

'I have not mentioned Captain Melville's name to Lord Weybridge, and I do not mean to do so.'

'Is that fair?'

'What on earth would you have me tell him? Did you tell Philip of every man who flirted with you?'

'No one ever flirted with me, Fanny.'

'You did not give them time. Seriously there is nothing to tell, so make your dear little mind happy.'

But Gerty was not happy. There was a dash of recklessness in her sister's manner that she did not like.

'Perhaps,' she added, coming back to the charge, 'he would not come if he knew you were here—for his own sake.'

'For his own sake!' repeated Fanny, opening wide her great violet eyes.

'Exactly. If he still cares for you, to see Weybridge spooning as he does would not be pleasant.'

'I don't intend that it shall be,' said the Lady Fanny.

## CHAPTER II.

### VÆ VICTIS.

I THINK that the wise little matron was right when she said perhaps the Red Lancer would not come if he knew he should meet



his old love. That sort of meeting is more embarrassing man than a woman. The man, you see, has to *begin*—has to or do something to show that he is, or is not, sulky; or is, not, glad; or is, or is not, utterly indifferent about it. The has only to retire into that much-neglected but strong citadel, to baffle or provoke explanations, just as it may suit. When—driving himself in the dog-cart that had been sent for to the station—Captain D'Arcy Melville passed the croquet-ground and received a merry little nod from the golden head which moment had nestled on his heart in that fatal conservatory, he so troubled in his mind, that he drove into a flower-bed, dropping cigar into his lap, and burned a big hole in his trousers.

Was it possible that his flight was not understood, or, understood, unresented? More strange still, was it possible the conduct which led to his flight was not understood, or, if understood, unresented? He hated himself for harbouring such a thought there was the outraged damsel patching the broken turf with mallet, and chaffing—actually chaffing—him for his awkward. Why had he not let the groom drive? she asked. And for six months had been eating his heart in remorse for the wrong he had done.

Yes; the dashing soldier, the boon companion, the keen sportsman, who was to have been the life and soul of that yachting party, turned out a bore—as is every man in love. A pair of sweet eyes haunted him, sometimes sad and dim with tears, sometimes flashing with scorn; and he had come home more in love than Talk of first love! 'the maiden passion for a maid,' as the Latins have it; that is milk-and-water in comparison with the strong accusing, self-tormenting passion of a man whose heart, hard by contact with such society as the Red Lancer had affected, touched by the love of a pure woman. Often and often had he assured himself that the best thing he had to live for was to see those dear eyes undimmed by sorrow, unlit by anger; to know that he was forgiven, and she was happy. What he saw on the cricket lawn, and was told later on in the smoking-room, ought to have afforded him supreme satisfaction; but it didn't.

She was engaged to the Marquis of Weybridge. She introduced the Red Lancer to her future lord without a tremble in her voice, a blush upon her cheek. She called him D'Arcy, as heretofore she questioned him about his voyage to Norway, and observed jolly it must have been! She said she would make Weybridge come to Norway next year, and would D'Arcy come too, and show her the way? Never did fair lady seem more bright and gay; and the future lord noticed with delight that those attentions which Gerty had called his 'spooning' were suddenly accepted much more graciously than they had been.

I am sorry to be obliged to speak evil of dignities, but

compels me to state that the most noble the Marquis of Weybridge was a cub,—an unlicked cub. Left an orphan when almost a baby, he had been taught by a long line of toadies that he was to be the greatest man of his day, without the least trouble to himself. He grew up overbearing, ignorant, and—I say it with bated breath of a peer of the realm—vulgar. Many a mother of marriageable daughters found this out when his engagement to a portionless damsel, three years his senior, was made public.

Now, however sincere a man may be in wishing happiness to the woman he loves but cannot marry, it is asking too much to expect him to like her more fortunate suitor. Under no circumstances could Lord Weybridge and Captain Melville have got on well together; but in an evil hour the noble Marquis, who set up for a wit, and could not get on without a butt, elected the grave and silent Lancer to that honourable post, and took the inevitable consequences. Never was man so thoroughly 'sat upon,' and never was man so happily ignorant of the fact.

One day, having parried a clumsy assault with a few quiet cutting words, the Red Lancer happened to catch Lady Fanny's eye, and thenceforward he never replied.

Poor Lady Fanny! The part she had assumed, the part that had promised such gratification to her wounded pride, was becoming cruelly hard to play, because she had played it so successfully. It is very nice to see your arrows go plump, one after another, into the 'gold,' but suppose that gold is the breast of a man you have not ceased to love, and the echo of the first dull thud tells you that he has not ceased to love you, what then? Patient and pale the Red Lancer took his punishment, remained and took it; 'for,' thought he, 'it will do me good.' He had not the wit to perceive the truth. He found, unknown to him, an ally in Lady Gerty.

'You know I don't like Captain Melville,' that lady observed to her sister, 'but I think you are too hard on him. Surely Weybridge is rude enough without your help.'

'I am not rude, Gerty.'

'No, you are worse—cuttingly polite. Has he ever referred to the past?'

'Never, and he never will.'

'I wonder he stays on. He scarcely ever shoots; he doesn't make himself agreeable to any one, and I'm sure people do not make themselves particularly agreeable to him—poor fellow!'

'I won't have him called "poor fellow," Gerty.'

'I say that because he is evidently ill. Don't you think he looks much older?'

'We all look older as we get old.'

'You know what I mean, Fanny.'

'He smokes too many cigars. He mopes about the grounds



all day, and smokes; I hate a man who mopes. Why can't he hit back at me, as he used to hit back at Weybridge?' cried Fanny petulantly, stamping her little foot.

'Perhaps he doesn't think it worth while,' replied the young matron; and so the conversation ended, but it left its sting. Fanny did not require her sister to tell her that her old lover was looking haggard and older, and O, how courteous and noble he was! Fanny did not 'hit back' at the noisy bumptious Marquis now. One little look which said, 'It pains me to see the man who is to be my husband so put down,' and he had lowered his arms. The aggressive blows fell with impunity. 'For my sake, for my sake!' mused poor Fanny; 'O, if he would only call me a little heartless beast, and spare my ears!'

The shooters were sometimes honoured by an invitation to ladies' five-o'clock tea, and on one of these occasions Lord Weybridge burst out with,

'O, you fellows, come here and see my new smoking-cap.'

Lady Fanny was embroidering one of those useful articles, and perhaps she had begun it as a present to her future lord, but she did not like his claiming it as his own before presentation in the confident style, so she said, 'Who told you it was for you?'

'No one; but of course it is.'

'I don't know that.'

'I know it is not for any one else,' he replied harshly, with a look on his face that Fanny had not seen there before, and which made her shiver.

'How do you know it is not for a fancy fair?'

'If it is, I'll buy it if it cost a thousand. So it will be mine the same.'

'I wish you would not talk so much about your money,' she said in a low voice, bending over her work; 'it isn't good form.'

'Wait till you have the spending of some of it. You'll find deuced good form then; ha, ha, ha! Come, let me try it on;' and he held out his hand for the cap.

'I tell you it is not—that is, *perhaps* it is not for you.'

'How comes the "perhaps"?'

'I will tell you. Philip says he wants a big bag to-morrow, he has promised to send away a lot of game. So this cap of honour (holding it coquettishly to the light) 'is to be the prize for the best sportsman. In those dear olden times it would have been given to the champion who killed most giants and enchanters, and rescued most damsels in distress, but in this degenerate age it will be the property of him who slays most partridges.'

'Then again I say it will be mine, for I'm the best shot here,' said his modest lordship.

'That you certainly are not,' interrupted bluff Philip Bouchier, who had overheard the loud boast.

'O, I give in to you; you're always at it. I spoke of your guests.'

'Melville is out and out the best shot here.'

'Why, he gives up at twelve o'clock, and loafs off to a farmhouse to drink cider.'

'That proves that he doesn't care much for shooting, but not that he isn't a good shot.'

The subject was brought up again after dinner, when the Red Lancer was present.

'I don't see exactly how the thing is to be decided,' he said.

'Sorry for you,' replied the Marquis. 'The prize is for the best shot; any fool can count the bag.'

'It does not follow that he who kills most birds is the best shot.'

'I suppose you'd have it go to whoever kills least. You'd be all right then—ha, ha, ha!' roared the Marquis.

'A man,' continued the Red Lancer, 'goes out with three guns and two keepers to load for him—'

'Meaning me,' interrupted the Marquis.

'He fires away a hundred cartridges haphazard, and he bags thirty brace,' pursued Melville, taking no notice of the interruption. 'Another carries and loads his own piece, and kills, say, twenty, with fifty shots—which is the better sportsman?'

'I don't see why a man shouldn't have extra guns and loaders if he can afford them; if he can't, so much the worse for him,' was his lordship's sulky reply.

'Exactly,' said Captain Melville, a little bitterly; 'that is the rule everywhere—so much the worse for the poor man.'

'But I will have you all start equal,' said Lady Fanny. 'I'm sure it is very unfair to have three guns. Isn't it, Philip? Do you like three guns?'

'No, dear, but—'

'Then if you don't, no one shall—at least, not to-morrow. Say they shall not, Gerty.'

'O, I will have nothing to do with it; I only want plenty of game,' replied the lady of the house. 'I've promised at least fifty brace, and I'm a lost woman if they are not forthcoming.'

'Then, as I give the prize, I shall make the rules. You are each to have *one* gun and *one* cartridge.'

Everybody laughed.

'That will provide a magnificent bag of two brace and a half, if none of them miss,' said Philip.

'How tiresome you are! Well, how many cartridges do you each want?'

'Say fifty.'

'Well, whoever shoots away his fifty quickest—will that do?'



'Hardly. Look here, Fan; you make the cap, and I'll settle the rules,' said her brother-in-law.

'O yes, do.'

'All right. We toss up for beats; every man carries and loads his own gun, and has fifty cartridges to begin with; whoever kills most birds with least shots wins the prize. Is that fair?'

All agreed that it was.

'Fifty cartridges isn't enough,' observed the Marquis.

'If any one wants more he can have them, but you are all on your honour to declare how many you have expended. Now, who enters? You, Weybridge, of course.'

'O, of course.'

'And you, Burbidge and Nelson?'

'I don't mind,' said each.

'Melville, you'll go in?'

'What for?'

'Why, Lady Fanny's prize. Haven't you been listening?'

'No; not to what you have been saying lately.'

'Never mind; I'll answer for you. You do go in, and Colonel Smart makes the fifth, all told.'

'And yourself six,' said Lady Fanny.

'O, I don't care to enter,' replied the host.

'Then I withdraw the prize,' said the lady quickly.

She thought she had got out of a scrape rather cleverly by inventing the prize myth, but that look of her future lord, full of threat and jealousy, troubled her. She knew what a thorough sportsman her brother-in-law was, and hoped that he would relieve her of all difficulty by winning. Why had he forced the Red Lancer in? It was so like Philip—always blundering with the very best intentions.

'Besides,' she continued, 'I don't like odd numbers. You never go all together, and how can you divide five fairly?'

'True for you, Fan. Well, I'll go in.'

'And do your best? I will have no favour.'

'And do my best. What a little tyrant it is!' the Squire replied, laughing.

When the ladies were about to retire for the night, Lord Weybridge took his *fiancée* apart, and said:

'I daresay you think this freak of yours very charming, young lady; but don't repeat it, that's all.'

'Look here, Henry. This is the second time you have given me that glance, and spoken in that tone of voice. To use your own words, *don't repeat it, that's all.*'

'I am sorry my looks and tones don't suit you. Is there anything else you have to complain of?' he asked, with a sneer.

'Yes, there is. I don't like your being so—what they call

"bumptious" with everybody. There is not a man in the house to whom you are commonly civil; and as to your conduct towards Captain Melville—'

'Well, let's have it. What about my conduct to Captain Melville?'

'It is simply ungentelemanly,' she replied, with heightened colour and sparkles in her violet eyes.

'So! you are going to make yourself that fellow's champion?'

'He needs no champion.'

'A supercilious beggar! I hate him.'

'So it seems.'

'Yes; and I intend to let it *seem* a good bit more before I'm done with him. As we are on likes and dislikes, is it true what I heard to-day, that he used to be playing the fool with you?'

'A question so elegantly put demands consideration, Lord Weybridge. To-morrow I shall be delighted to answer it, and any others that your good taste may lead you to put.'

'Come, Fanny, don't be cross. Good-night. Shake hands.'

She let him take her hand, and, but for his coarse nature, he would have felt how cold it was, and how it trembled.

### CHAPTER III.

#### GUILTY OR NOT GUILTY?

THE portentous day that was to see the great shooting-match for Lady Fanny's gift dawned pretty much as other days have dawned. The competitors tossed for beats and companions, and all the luck was with the noble Marquis. Not only was the best beat but the worst shot assigned to him, whilst the Red Lancer was paired with Philip Bouchier, whose eye there was no chance of 'wiping' when single birds got up. Every man was placed upon his honour as to the number of cartridges he used, and they were all to meet for luncheon at a certain wood where the beats joined. A little boy—Willie Burbidge, son and heir of one of the competitors—begged hard to be allowed to follow, and see the sport; and thanks to the intercession of the Red Lancer, who was very popular with children, his prayer was partly granted. He was to come out with the luncheon-cart, and 'I say, Captain Melville,' pleaded this precocious sportsman, 'if you ask William, he'd let me drive where the road is straight, and there isn't anything coming along.'

I do not know if William was complaisant. Perhaps he was not; for the luncheon-cart arrived safely and to its time, when the following state of the poll was declared:

Lord Weybridge	.	.	.	.	27	head	with	31	cartridges.
Mr. Burbidge	.	.	.	.	17	"		28	"
Mr. Philip Bouchier	.	.	.	.	25	"		30	"
Captain Melville	.	.	.	.	26	"		29	"
Sir Charles Nelson	.	.	.	.	20	"		26	"
Colonel Smart	.	.	.	.	23	"		34	"



From which it will appear that the principals had been shooting very steadily. The noble Marquis had the heaviest bag, but the lighter pouch; Philip Bouchier had missed five shots, and the Red Lancer three. He would have had one more bird but for an accident.

Now the noble Marquis, with his habit of shooting with three guns and two loaders, was wont to expend a good deal of powder and shot upon the ambient air. He had 'wiped the eye' of his companion on several occasions, and had rarely missed himself. On the whole, he flattered himself that he had done splendidly. He was not pleased, therefore, to find that he was only one bird to the good over the man whose capacity as a gunner he had so often sneered at. 'I wouldn't give a curse,' he observed with his usual good taste, 'for a fellow who draws only where he is sure—he'd make a good gamekeeper, that's all.' His lordship was pleased to make himself disagreeable in other ways, and took, perhaps, rather more care than was good for him.

When luncheon was over, and they had lit their cigars, little Willie Burbidge sidled up to the Red Lancer, and whispered,

'I say, give us a cartridge.'

'What for?'

'To make a devil.'

(A devil, dear ladies, is a sort of humble firework much esteemed by small boys. You get some gunpowder, wet it, and pinch it into the form of a pastile. When dry, you light the point, and it fizzes away, throwing out sparks which generally fall upon your clothes and burn them. For this reason there is sometimes a difference of opinion between juveniles and their parents and guardians as to the use of this pyrotechnic.)

'I'll give you one when we get home,' said the Red Lancer.

'O, but I want it now,' persisted the boy.

'Then want must be your master, sonny; cartridges are valuable to-day—stop, though; I think I can let you have one after a pursued the good-natured soldier, bethinking himself of the accident before mentioned, by which he had lost the chance of killing a partridge; 'one that missed fire.'

'What does that mean?'

'Wouldn't go off—here it is.'

'But then it is no use,' pleaded Willie, accepting it with indifference.

'No use to me,' Melville replied, rising and taking up his gun.

'May I venture to inquire,' said Lord Weybridge, 'whether that absurd rule limiting us to fifty shots is to be persisted in?'

'No limit was fixed. We agreed to start with fifty; you can have as many more as you please. I shall draw another two dozen and I advise you to do the same,' answered his host.







C. O. Murray, del.

Edmund Evans

"AS YOU WILL HAVE THERE!"

'That reminds me,' observed the Red Lancer, 'that one of mine missed fire. Of course I can have another?'

'O, of course,' replied two or three voices.

'I don't see that,' Lord Weybridge broke in; 'a miss is a miss, anyhow.'

'Well, it is not worth discussing,' said Melville carelessly.

'I wonder why you mentioned it then,' sneered the noble Marquis; 'when men are on their honour there should be no hanky-panky.'

'I am sorry I *did* mention it, but after that last observation I must persist. Do you remember, Bouchier, when we were doubling the hedgerow by the willows, and a single bird got up my side?'

'Yes, you killed.'

'With my left-hand barrel; the first missed fire.'

'Well, then there is, of course, an end of the question, as you say so,' replied the Squire. 'Here, Baker' (this to the head-keeper), 'give Captain Melville a cartridge, and don't count it.'

'So that he is to have fifty-one to our fifty?' said Lord Weybridge.

'I am sure that Captain Melville will return the miss fire if you wish it, my lord,' replied his host; 'but really, amongst gentlemen—'

'I haven't got it to return,' said the Red Lancer, flushing slightly; 'but if—'

The noble Marquis gave a long whistle, rose, and threw away his cigar. If he had said, 'The man is a liar, and trying to cheat,' he could not have expressed his meaning more clearly. The Red Lancer rose too, and sauntered away, merely observing, 'I suppose you don't want to begin again just yet.' A few minutes afterwards he was seen walking with little Willie, and, as ill-luck would have it, they passed round the wood to a stile where Lord Weybridge had found a place to repose, enjoying another cigar. The Red Lancer had told the boy to 'run away like a good sonny;' and what passed was known only to the two men, until Melville was overheard to say, in a loud voice, 'This is not to be endured, my lord. As you *will* have it—there!' A sharp report followed, and the Marquis fell to the ground weltering in his blood!

'On purpose!' cried Lady Fanny. 'Shot him on purpose! O, impossible! D'Arcy—Captain Melville—do you hear what they say? Why are you silent? For Heaven's sake, speak!'

'There has been too much speaking already; stand aside, dear,' her brother-in-law, 'and let us pass. Asking questions will do good now. Run on to the house and tell your sister. Will that *tor* never come?'

Lady Fanny, walking in the park, had seen at a distance the return of the shooting-party much earlier than usual, and wondering



what it could be that was carried so carefully and slowly upon a hurdle, went out of her way to meet them. There she saw the man she was to marry stretched to all appearance dead, and heard that the man she loved had murdered him!

Things looked very black for Captain D'Arcy Melville.

'He has killed me, the villain!—he has killed me,' gasped Lord Weybridge, before he fainted with pain and loss of blood, and the former's angry words, 'As you *will* have it—there!' spoken just before the shot, were terribly suggestive of premeditation. When the doctor had dressed the wound, and the general confusion and excitement had a little passed away, it was found that the Red Lancer had gone. Things looked blacker still.

He had received (so he said in a hasty note he left for his host) an important telegram calling him at once to his brother. He would return in a day or two at the latest. Would they telegraph to him hourly, if there was danger, the condition of the wounded man?

Now the state of affairs between Captain Melville and his elder brother was pretty well known. Was this a time to run off about money differences? When had he received this 'important telegram'? One of the servants stated that it had been given to him that morning. 'What! before we went out shooting?' Yes, just as the Captain was leaving the house. Blacker and blacker! The business was not so pressing, then, as to stop his day's sport.

At first, hearty Philip Bouchier would not hear a word against his friend. It was an accident; purely and simply an accident, such as had often happened in the shooting-field. But this sudden flight? Why, good heavens, common humanity should have made him stay and see if the poor fellow was to live or die!

The wound was a frightful one, but not of itself mortal. Imagine a charge of shot going like a ball—as it would at a distance of only five yards—through a man's shoulder. 'With his constitution he *may* pull round,' said the doctors, 'if kept perfectly quiet.' But he would not be quiet. 'Is that villain in custody?' was his first question on regaining consciousness; and the answer threw him into a state of anger that made the bleeding burst out afresh. Nothing short of the sight of a warrant for Captain Melville's apprehension would quiet him.

The shooting-party was broken up; the guests all left; and you may suppose that Philip Bouchier, his wife, and her sister had little time or heart to read newspapers; otherwise they would have read the following paragraph:

'We regret to have to record the decease of Sir Claud Melville of Thorburn, well known and respected for his labours in connection with the education movement. The deceased gentleman was born in the year 1841, and was consequently in the prime of life. He died, after a few hours' illness, at the family seat, and, we are glad

to add, was attended in his last moments by his only brother, Captain D'Arcy Melville, who succeeds to the baronetcy and estates.'

The first telegram sent to Thorburn ran:

'Wound not mortal. Come back.'

The second:

'No immediate danger. For your own sake, come back.'

This was followed by a letter in which Bouchier narrated what had passed with regard to the warrant, and added: 'If you come back and stay here, it need not be enforced. For God's sake, D'Arcy, come and face it out.'

When the third post arrived and brought no answer, honest Philip made a gesture of disgust, and said: 'I give him up.' Every one gave him up except Lady Fanny.

'I won't believe him guilty,' she pleaded; 'it is not in his nature to do such a thing. There is some horrible misunderstanding or accident somewhere. It's no use asking me where or how—there is.' She lost her high spirits and her good looks; she grew thin and wan.

'Poor thing, how she suffers for my lord!' said the servants.

'I did not think you cared so much for him, dear,' said her sister one day; 'but, thank Heaven, the worst is over, and I daresay you will be allowed to see him in a day or two.'

Poor Fanny smiled—the ghost of her once sunny smile. I am bound to declare that it was not anxiety about Lord Weybridge which paled her fair cheek.

With his bodily strength, the strength of the noble Marquis's hatred for the Red Lancer, and his desire to prosecute him as a criminal, increased. There was no help for it now; the warrant had to be placed in the hands of the police for execution. Their first idea was to seek the accused at Thorburn. Yes; Sir D'Arcy had been there, but only for a few hours. He seemed terribly affected by his brother's death; quite 'dazed like,' an old servant said. He had left the house on foot late at night, without any luggage. The funeral took place in his absence. No one knew what had become of him. The trained detectives soon got on his track. A gentleman without a hat, who talked very wildly, had gone by the mail train to Fixby Junction; and at the dismal hotel of that dismal place—a mere meeting of railways on a bleak moor in the north of England—they found the Red Lancer. Hiding from the law? Not quite! Burned up with brain-fever; raving so violently in his delirium that at times it took three strong men to hold him down on his bed. How long had he been there? Well, it would be a fortnight come Tuesday.

'Have you noticed any change in Willie lately?' Mrs. Burbidge asked her husband one night.



'Yes, I have. He seems low and mopish. Can he be sickening for any complaint?'

'Dr. Stevens saw him yesterday, and says there is nothing the matter. Let us go up and see him.'

So up they went; and although it was past eleven o'clock, Willie was awake, and there were marks of tears upon his face and little pillow.

'Willie my man, don't you feel well?' asked the father.

'I'm quite well, papa.'

'But you've been crying.'

'Yes, papa.'

'And what has made you unhappy?'

'Nothing, papa.'

'Come, come, Willie; that's not true.'

'Well, papa, I was thinking of what a boy said to-day.'

'Tell me what he said.'

'He said that Captain Melville was a bad man, and—and—deserved to be hanged,' gasped Willie; 'and he's *not*—he's *not*—he's *not*!'

'Hush, my darling! hush!' said the mother, taking the little face, down which the tears were streaming, to her bosom. 'Hush, Willie!—Captain Melville was very kind to him, and he feels it, poor child,' she added in a low voice to her husband.—'Don't cry, Willie.'

'I *must* cry with you, mamma, but don't tell. As for that boy, when I'm big, if I don't give it him!' said the child, his eyes flashing through his tears.

'The best thing we can do, Willie, is not to talk about Captain Melville, or even think about him any more,' said his father.

'O, papa, why not?'

'Because he has behaved very badly.'

'He did not mean to hurt Lord Weybridge, papa.'

'I hope he did not; anyhow, it is not for us to judge. But this he *has* done. He has shirked; he has not met his accusers like a man; he has not dared to stand out and tell the truth. That's bad, Willie. Let it be a lesson to you, my boy. Never shirk. The worst of all cowardice is moral cowardice; that is, not daring to tell the truth.'

'I will tell the truth, papa, I *will*.'

'That's my own sonny!'

'O, papa, don't look at me like that, as—as if you loved me. I—I did it!'

'Willie!'

'Yes, papa, and I have shirked and hid the truth. O, do forgive me, do!'

'Have you been dreaming, my child?'

'No, no; let me hide my face and tell. Mammie darling, put your arm round me—tight. I will be brave; I'll tell all.'

He sobbed so that it was some time before they could make out his story. It came to this. Captain Melville had given him a cartridge to make a devil, but said that it had missed fire. The boy, thinking that it would not serve his purpose, and eager for the sport he had in view, slyly changed that cartridge for one out of the keeper's bag, which he put in his pocket. But after luncheon Captain Melville had told him that he must return what he, the Captain, had given him, because the Marquis was making a fuss (so the Red Lancer put it) about the number of his shots. Willie, without dreaming of the consequences, reluctantly gave up his ill-gotten prize, and the next moment they met Lord Weybridge. 'So you see, papa, he thought it was the bad one, and—and it went off,' sobbed poor Willie.

A fuller explanation was given by the Red Lancer when he regained his senses. 'His lordship had doubted my word about the miss-fire, and when I got what I had every reason to think was the cartridge back from Willie, I showed it to him, and bade him judge for himself. He tossed it from him contemptuously, and said it had never been in a gun. And indeed it had not; but I had tried what I *thought* was it half-a-dozen times, and always with the same result, so that I did not examine it then. I told him that I had tried it repeatedly, and asked if I should do so again. There are reasons why I did not want to quarrel with him, and I wished to convince him. He replied, "Any man who says that is a miss-fire is either a fool or a —." I could not stand this. I said the words that have been repeated, "*As you will have it—there!*" expecting to hear the dull click of the hammer as before; and so confident it would be so, that I did not notice that the muzzle of the gun was towards him. I held it at my hip and pulled the trigger. You know the rest.'

'But the telegram?'

'Another mistake. When I asked for leave of absence, my colonel grumbled; I had had so much, and there was to be an inspection in a few days. I suggested that when the day was fixed he could telegraph for me, and I would join. Well, I thought that message was my summons, and I wanted to shoot, because—well, no matter now.'

'You wanted to win Fanny's cap?'

'I did. A man does not like to be sneered at about a thing he doesn't do badly. If the message had been what I expected, and I had read it, I was bound to go. So I put it in my pocket unopened, and only knew the truth when we came home.'

'If you had only told us.'

'Told you! Put yourself in my place. For aught I knew I had



just killed a man, and just learned that my brother was dying. I had not used me well, but he *was* my brother, and he repented the last. Do you expect that a man, stunned as I was, could reason and think what to do? If my life had depended upon it, I could not have said a word when your sister appealed to me in the park. As soon as I closed my brother's eyes I started to come back, but I would have come back, but I was struck down on the way. I thought I was drunk on the platform of the junction—I was not. Bouchier, MAD!

So every one was satisfied except the noble Marquis, who persisted in his own version: Willie was a little liar, the Red Lancer's illness was all a sham. He so disgusted his hosts, that as soon as he was well enough to move, he received a hint to do so. When Lady Fanny, who had never swerved in her belief of Melville's innocence, he was furious.

'I suppose, now the fellow's got some money, you want to throw me over and marry him,' he burst out one day. Lady Fanny replied, with great dignity, that her brother would answer that question; and he did so with this result. The Marquis of Weybridge was left free to bestow his noble hand upon some other fair one. The Red Lancer went to church on a week-day for the first time in his life, and came out again with a lady, who looked very happy, on her arm, and bore the strongest possible resemblance to Lady Fanny (born Clanvyse).

Some days before this event the following conversation took place:

'Do you know, D'Arcy, that you were a big goose?'

'Admitted, lady mine, but what for?'

'To run away from me as you did.'

'I could not have married you, Fan; I had almost nothing to give my pay.'

'Well?'

'And I was in debt.'

'Well, we could have waited.'

'You *would* have waited.'

'A lifetime—I loved you.'

And, strange to say, though there was no conservatory and no music and no fountain and no scent of flowers to bewitch the senses, when his arm got round her, the fair head drooped upon his shoulder, the four lips met, as they had met before, only for just one moment longer.

## THE SHAH AT HOME IN 1716

THERE is something very pleasant and refreshing in taking up an old book of travels. One doesn't lay oneself out for a sort of intellectual wrestling-match, prepared to deal with stiff physical ethnological and philological problems, as when one attacks a scientific traveller's book at the present day. On the contrary, we expect to be pleasantly entertained and amused, as in the company of an old-fashioned gossiping man of the world, hoping to catch some glimpses of the manners and customs of foreign parts lang syne, but not looking to acquire much exact knowledge thereby.

Such a restful book is that of John Bell of Antermoney in Scotland, entitled *Travels from St. Petersburg in Russia to divers parts of Asia*, printed for the author at Glasgow by Robert and Andrew Foulis, printers to the University, 1763. It is published by subscription, and among its subscribers—some five hundred noblemen and gentlemen, more or less distinguished—are numbered Alexander Boswell of Auchinleck, the father, we suppose, of the biographer of Johnson, and the ever-illustrious Adam Smith. But the diary and notes from which the book is compiled are of a much earlier date.

In good Queen Anne's days, that is, in the year 1714, the last of her reign and life, this John Bell, a Scotchman of some little patrimony and good parts, who had employed some of his time in medical studies, and whose mind had since early youth been bent on Eastern travel, embarked at London for St. Petersburg on board the good ship *Prosperity* of Ramsgate. The great city of the North had then but recently risen from the marshes of the Neva at the bidding of Tsar Peter. Five years before, Pultowa had been fought, the great battle that secured the supremacy of Russia in the North, and for the first time rendered her course of progress secure. But since then Peter had passed under the Caudine forks on the banks of the Pruth, owing his safety and the preservation of his army to the clemency of the Turks; and had learned a lesson of caution and humility. He had found that his true destiny was not, as a conquering general, like Alexander of Macedon, to found an Eastern empire, as it were, at a bound, but by policy and prudence and incessant labour to push forward little by little the great destinies of his empire. He was now busied in increasing and embellishing St. Petersburg, in strengthening his army and navy, and in feeling the pulses of his Asiatic neighbours by means of envoys and negotiators.

At that time the Tsar's chief physician was one Dr. Areskine,



whom we may certainly affirm, notwithstanding the unfamiliar spelling of his name, to be of good Scotch blood. To this physician Bell had recommendatory letters from some people of worth. The doctor exerted himself to gratify the desire of his countryman to travel, and succeeded in getting him an appointment as gentleman in medical attendance on an embassy from his Czarish majesty the Sophy of Persia, then preparing to set out for Ispahan, Artek Petrovich Valensky, Captain of the Guards, being the designated envoy.

At this time, when Asiatic affairs are exciting some interest and we are actually expecting the arrival on our own shores of the reigning Shah, we may occupy half-an-hour usefully and pleasantly in accompanying Mr. Bell upon his journey, and taking a few notes of what he sees and describes.

Our travellers leave St. Petersburg on the 15th June 1716, Moscow being their first point of destination; they are on horseback, and wagons accompany them containing the baggage. They find the country adjacent to the new city covered with woods, 'consisting of various kinds of pines, birch, alder, aspens, and other trees natural to the northern climates.' These woods are stored with game; such as hares, which are white as snow in winter and turn brown in summer, wild deer, bears, and wolves. There are also about the lake of Ladoga, from which the Neva issues. There is a great variety of wild fowl. The uruba, black, with beautiful streaks about its head and eyes, the cock about the size of a turkey, the hen less, and of a brown colour; the heathcock, a kind of partridge that perches on trees and feeds on fir-tops and cranberries; the 'tamachan, well known in Scotland'—all these birds are here plenty. Snipe and woodcock breed here, says our author.

Skirting Lake Ladoga, they make their way to the river Volga, which connects Lakes Ladoga and Ilmen, and here they take boats and make their way with oar and sail to Novgorod the Great. Here they sail along Lake Ilmen, and up the wide and sluggish river Msta to Bronnitsa, where they discharge their boats and take horse once more; and travel across country to Tver, where they resume the noble far-stretching Volga. From this point there is uninterrupted navigation to the Caspian Sea. But the river here makes a great bend to the north-east, and in this elbow is situated Moscow on the river Moskva, which, after making a junction with the river Oka, eventually falls into the Volga far to the eastward. Our travellers, who desire to equip themselves at Moscow for their long toilsome journey, continue their progress by land to the ancient capital of Russia.

Moscow at that date, 1715, was 'fortified with a strong brick wall called Belogorod, having embrasures and a ditch; within this another wall called Kitaygorod; this last encloses what is called

the Crimlin.' But the former names, we beg to inform our travellers, are rather applicable to the districts enclosed by the walls than to the walls themselves; Gorod meaning 'town,' and Byélai Gorod 'the white town.' Beyond the brick walls was an earthen one of great circumference.

Here, if we can credit our author, and the only point of doubt arises from the book having been compiled so long after the notes were taken, that it is possible he may have incorrectly filled in certain details from memory, we may set at rest the controversy as to whether the great bell of Moscow was actually ever hung. Mr. Bell is distinct on this point. At the time of his visit the bell was still hanging in its tower. 'Here also stands a lofty tower wherein is hung the largest bell in the world, called Ivan Veleke, weighing about ten thousand pounds.'

Leaving Moscow on the 21st August, the embassy embarked on the river Moskva, and fell down the river to Nishni Novgorod, 'a great town defended by a castle.' Here they enter the Volga, and are nearly wrecked on the same night, 25th October, by floating ice. They sail down the river to Kasan, the capital of the province of the same name, where this leisurely embassy determines to winter.

Kasan was anciently a great Tatar town, and was captured by the Tsar Ivan Vasilievich in the year 1552. A part of the town was at the time of Bell's visit occupied by Tatar Mahometans, and is so to this day. Here Bell meets with an Englishman: 'He was by trade a carpenter, and had been in the Russian service; but being suspected of deserting, he was condemned to banishment to this country for a certain time; and notwithstanding that was elapsed, the poor man, deprived of all means of asserting his liberty, remained still in the same situation. He bought a Tzeremish wife from her father for six roubles, about thirty shillings sterling. He brought her to visit me. She was a woman of a cheerful and open countenance, and dressed in the manner of her country.' We also make the acquaintance here of two Swedish generals, Hamilton and Rosen, who are prisoners of war, captured at the battle of Pultowa, but whose captivity is made as little irksome as possible, as they are invited to all public diversions, and live easily at the governor's expense. A little incident occurs here which gives us a formidable opinion of the rigour of the Eastern Church, and makes us hope that any possible *rapprochement* of the English and Oriental Churches may not introduce such hard discipline among us:

'Upon the banks of the Gazanka stands a monastery very pleasantly situated. I accompanied our interpreter to visit the abbot, who received us in a very friendly manner. He would not, however, give the interpreter his blessing, nor admit him into the church during divine service, unless he pulled off his wig. He, professing the communion of the Greek Church, expostulated a little with the



priest, telling him that their learned bishops at Mosco made no scruples. The abbot replied, that it was contrary to the rules discipline to allow any man to enter the church with his head covered.'

Kasan was at that time noted for a considerable manufactory of Russian leather, which was exported to Leghorn and other parts of Europe. The Russians originally acquired the art of this manufacture from the Tatars, but have carried it away to other parts. Even now the Russian boots made at Torjok are called 'Kasan boots.'

Mr. Bell explains—an explanation which still holds good—the peculiar smell of Russian leather is due to its being dressed with a kind of tar extracted from the bark of the birch-tree. This kind of Russian smell seems all-pervading, and the writer well remembers that in the Crimea the approach of Russian soldiers, if the wind was favourable, could be detected for a distance of some hundred yards by the nose, so strong is this peculiar flavour. No doubt, when used as fuel the birch imparts the same aroma to its smoke.

They took leave of Kasan on the 4th June; but the Volga was still so swollen, that one of their boats was driven by the current night into the woods and wrecked between two trees, the crew saving themselves by clambering up the trees. It is satisfactory to learn, however, that the consequence of this novel description of shipwreck was not so fatal as the circumstances were alarming, for the vessel was got off next day with inconsiderable damage.'

At Samara, situated at the eastern angle of a great bend of the Volga, they witness an encampment of predatory Tatars, to the number of two or three thousand, who are on a marauding excursion. They have no artillery, and are therefore innocuous to the garrisons who, however, durst not attack them.

They witness a great horse-market at Saratof, held by the nomadic Tatars, to which buyers come from various parts of Russia.

On the 13th July their voyage down the Volga terminates at Astrachan, known to us chiefly in connection with that woolly skin of fur much used as a border to cuffs and other garments. As to this fur our author says:

'Before I leave Astrachan it may be proper to rectify a mistaken opinion, which I have observed frequently to occur in grave German authors, who, in treating of the remarkable things of this country, relate that there grows in this desert, or stepp, adjoining to Astrachan, in some plenty, a certain shrub or plant, called in the Russian language *Tartarskey varashka*, i.e. Tartarian lamb, with the skin of which the caps of the Armenians, Persians, Tartars, &c., are fashioned. They also write that this *Tartarskey varashka* partakes of animal as well as vegetative life; that it eats up and devours all the grass and weeds within its reach. Though it may be thought that

\* Erman's *Siberia*, vol. i. p. 82.

opinion so very absurd could find no credit with people of the meanest share of understanding, yet I have conversed with some who have seemed much inclined to believe it. So very prevalent is the prodigious and absurd with some part of mankind.' (See note on the lamb plant at end.)

'In search of this wonderful plant I walked many a mile,' with the satisfactory negative result of not finding any. Our author subsequently explains that the best of these furs are brought 'from Bucharia, Chiva, and the countries adjacent,' and consist, in reality, of the skins of lambs which are killed when still in a foetal state.

From Astrachan the embassy sails in five vessels down the Caspian, and lands after a voyage of three weeks at 'Niezabbat, a place lying about two days' journey east from Derbend.' Here the secretary of the embassy loses himself in the woods, and spends the night among the branches of a tree. So fearful were the sounds of the forest, that when found next day and brought into the tents his mind was wandering, and he could only talk of the terrible sounds that haunted him. Numbers of people, he persisted, had surrounded his tree, all talking together in different languages, and he could not be made to believe that it was only the jackalls he had heard. The unfortunate secretary never recovered the tone of his mind after the horrors of that night, aggravated, no doubt, by the malaria of the swampy forest, and he died two months afterwards.

After waiting some time at this place for an escort and baggage animals, and suffering much from malaria, a maymander or conductor arrived with a guard of Persian soldiers and a supply of transport, and the embassy leave the pestiferous place with a great deal of pleasure.

Our author notes that at Backu, two days' journey eastward from Niezabbat, are many fountains of naphtha, a sort of petroleum. 'The Persians burn it in their lamps; no rain can extinguish it; but the smell is disagreeable.' Nor has the course of time improved it in that respect, Mr. Bell.

The practice of Eastern nations at that time with respect to ambassadors, a practice taken advantage of by the penurious Tsar with some rapacity, was that the entire cost of the envoy's progress should be defrayed by the potentate whose guest he was considered to be. There seems to have been much squabbling between the envoy and his staff as to the distribution of the gifts received from the Shah; and the ambassador himself is dissatisfied, and remonstrates with the Persian government as to the smallness of his money allowance, which is finally fixed at about 30*l.* a day. As one may expect in so despotically governed a country, the central authorities desire to cast as much as possible of the costs and charges of entertaining the embassy on the population through which they pass. In consequence, this peaceful embassy occasions as much consterna-



tion in its progress as would an invading army. At its approach the villagers abandon their dwellings, and fly for safety to the woods or mountains. The ambassador and his suite make themselves at home in the empty houses, and no doubt the officers in charge of the cortège take care to utilise any supplies they may find upon the spot.

In fourteen days from their leaving the coast they reached Shemakha,\* where they are received in state by the kalentar or ruler of the city, whether the son of a king or no does not appear. A house is allotted to the embassy, and they settle down for a while. Here our traveller makes the acquaintance of Father Peter Ricard, in company with one Monsieur Bourgard, a French merchant. The former has a small flock of Christian Armenians, whom he has converted from the Eastern to the Western communion, for he cannot venture to make proselytes among the faithful. The city is described as large but meanly built, the streets irregular and narrow; it stands on the declivity of a hill, and rises toward the top in the form of an amphitheatre. 'Above the town, on the summit of the hill, stands an high edifice, having many windows and a gallery, in which every day, at the rising and setting of the sun, is held a kind of concert of music composed of long trumpets, large drums, and hautboys, which make a dreadful sound. It is reputed that this custom is as ancient as the time of Alexander the Great.'

In Bell's time there was a considerable traffic here in raw silk and cotton, the greatest part of which was sold to the English and Dutch factories at Ispahan, and sent to Aleppo. 'The country about Shamachy, besides many kinds of fruits, produces plenty of wheat, barley, and very fine grapes, from which the Christians make very good wine; they keep it in great jars, resembling the Florence oil ones, which they deposit underground in their gardens, covering them above with a thin stone, neatly pasted about the edges, for the better preservation of the liquor. When they give an entertainment, they spread carpets round the jar, which is generally placed in a shade, and on these the guests are seated.'

Has not this a very agreeable *Arabian-Nights* kind of flavour?

After staying for two months at Shemakha, with one hundred and sixty camels and near two hundred horses and mules, they take their departure for Ispahan. They cross the river Kura, on a bridge of boats, just below its confluence with the Araxis; then they come into a country that is under the dominion of Persia to this day.

In crossing a desert plain of Kurdistan they meet with some Persian sportsmen. 'They had several greyhounds, and a couple of large hawks which were trained to fly at antelopes; the hawks cannot, indeed, hold so strong a creature as an antelope, but they fly about its head, and thereby retard its velocity till the greyhound or horsemen overtake it.'

\* Now belonging to Russia; at that time under the nominal suzerainty of Persia.

All the way they advance they spread terror before them. At a small town called Aggar 'the kalentar ordered the citizens to arm and oppose our entry; and, notwithstanding the remonstrances of our conductor, he persisted unalterable in his purpose.' At another village the inhabitants barricaded the entries, and refused the embassy admittance. 'I must confess,' says Bell, 'I could scarce blame these people for their behaviour, because, had we been admitted, the inhabitants must all have left their own houses; and where could a parcel of poor women and children have found shelter in such extremity of cold?'

By and by they come to Tauris, a city still retaining traces of its former magnificence; particularly an old temple converted into a mosque, now neglected and ruinous. The roof is supported by many stately pillars of porphyry, almost entire, some whereof are of a greenish colour, with other colours and veins of gold interspersed. It is in Bell's time a poor mean place, chiefly built of adobe. The inhabitants carried on a considerable commerce in raw silk, and made carpets and silk and cotton stuffs.

Leaving Tauris, they advance with difficulty, owing to the snow. On reaching a village called Karakhina, they are met by an Armenian priest, attended by a company of country people, who come to welcome them as fellow Christians. 'One of them carried a painted crucifix, raised on a long pole; others played on flutes and hautboys, and other musical instruments; to which one or two persons kept time, by beating two thin brassplates against each other; and many of them sung hymns and psalms.'

At another village they reclaim a Russian who had been sold as a slave to a Persian master by the Tatars.

Coming to Koom, they are permitted to enter the mosque containing the tomb of 'Fathima, the granddaughter to the prophet.' The monument was encompassed 'with a grate-work of pure silver, very valuable.' Koom was then celebrated for sword and poniard blades.

From Koom they travel to Kashan, a large and populous city, situated in a fertile plain.

Between Kashan and Ispahan they fall in with a dreadful spider, called the stellio or tarantula, and by the Persians inkureck; it is in shape and size somewhat like a large spider, but overgrown with hair. I was informed,' says Mr. Bell, 'that it neither stings nor bites, but drops its venom upon the skin, which is of such a nature that it immediately penetrates into the body, and causes dreadful symptoms; such as giddiness of the head, a violent pain in the stomach, and a lethargic stupefaction. The remedy, as in the former case of the scorpion, is the application of the same animal, when bruised, to the part, by which the poison is extracted. They also make the patient drink abundance of sweet milk; after which he is put in a



kind of tray, suspended by ropes fixed in the four corners; it is turned round till the ropes are twisted hard together, and when let go at once the untwining causes the basket to turn round with a quick motion, which has the effect of an emetic.'

Arrived within a day's journey of Ispahan, they halt to prepare for their public entry. And next day they reach the bourne of their toilsome march, and proceed into the city in all the pride and parade at their command. A kettledrum and four trumpets, 'two hey-dukes' in Hungarian habits, and other marks of pomp and splendour, being then displayed. All the streets are crowded with spectators, and the Sophy himself is suspected to have gratified his royal curiosity by peeping out of a window concealed behind his ladies.

The embassy is housed in a noble palace in the middle of the city, with a garden, three courts, and apartments sufficient for the ambassador and all his retinue.

Our author describes Ispahan as an extensive city; its streets are mostly narrow and irregular, except one 'noble street, very broad and straight, which leads to a stately stone bridge over the river Schendervo, which runs between the city and the suburbs.' This bridge far exceeded in magnificence anything of the kind our traveller ever saw before. 'It is broad enough for a horseman and two carriages to pass abreast,' he marks in wonder, 'and has galleries on either side, which are covered for the convenience of people on foot, and watchmen are stationed at each end to prevent disorder.' 'There are few houses in the city which have not cisterns of water conveyed in pipes from the river. Most of the inhabitants have their houses apart, surrounded with gardens, so that at a distance it appears like a city in the forest, and affords a very agreeable prospect.' At certain distances there are fountains of water that play continually, round which are spread carpets; and thither the Persians resort to drink coffee, smoke tobacco, and hear news. 'The houses are generally built with bricks hardened by the sun, the roofs are flat and covered with a terrace; they make but a mean appearance from the street, though within they are neat and clean, and very convenient for the Persian manner of life.'

The first audience of the ambassador is arranged with much magnificence. The embassy parade with their kettledrum and trumpets and other paraphernalia, mounted on horses furnished by the Shah, the saddles and bridles ornamented with gold and silver. At the gate of the palace they dismount, for none are permitted to enter on horseback except the Shah himself. Passing through an inner court, they come to an arched gate, surrounded with benches and spread with carpets; there they must sit till the Shah is ready to receive them; and they wait for two hours, during which all the ministers of state and officers of the household pass them in great splendour; then a large elephant, then two large lions.

Having passed through this ordeal, it is intimated to the ambassador that the Shah is waiting to receive him.

They enter a spacious garden, wherein are twenty horses standing in a row, richly caparisoned in gold and silver, their trappings ornamented with sapphires, emeralds, and precious stones. The horses are tethered to a cord, which is tied to a stake of gold at each end, and a golden mallet lies by the side of each golden stake. Their hind feet are hobbled with chains of gold. At each end of the row is a golden bowl full of water. Then they pass two lions chained to the ground, each with a golden basin before him. Behind the lions stood the elephant, with his rider on his back. As the ambassador approaches, the lions crouch and the elephant bends his fore-knee.

Turning to the left, they see the hall of audience, which stands in the middle of the garden, contiguous to the seraglio on one side, and open on the other. Before the entrance is a large fountain, the basin of which is filled with flowers.

At the stair of the hall the ambassador and six of his retinue only are allowed to proceed. They must put off their slippers, and go barefooted the eight marble steps which run the whole length of the hall. An awning shades the stairs and the whole interior of the hall. The ceiling is arched and set with mirrors, which descend within three feet of the floor, where they are replaced by a wainscoting of rich silken carpets, embroidered with gold and silver. In the middle of the hall are two fountains spouting water, which, falling upon roses and other fragrant flowers, diffuses a pleasing perfume. At the farther end is a semicircle, where sits the Shah, attended by twenty eunuchs; one carries his sabre, another his bow, a third the quiver with arrows, a fourth the golden calienne or tobacco-pipe.

At the entry of the ambassador the fountains began to play at their full height, so that the water fell into the basin like a thick rain, and a mist as a veil was interposed between the infidel and the King of Kings. Nothing could be clearly distinguished for some time, and the Shah himself appeared as in a fog. Everything was still as death. The master of the ceremonies then took the ambassador by the arm, and conducted him within six yards of the throne. He, desiring to advance to deliver his credentials into the hands of the Shah, is prevented by the chief minister, who receives them and lays them before the Shah, who touches them with his hand. The ambassador makes a short speech, the Shah answers through his minister, and then the envoy is conducted to his seat, which it may be called, something about a foot high, whereon he must squat in a very undignified position, his attendants also squatting behind him. Poor gentlemen!

All this time music is playing softly, and the voice of the mufti goes through the hall, reading, without intermission, chapters of the Koran.



When the ambassador was seated, all the ministers of state sat down on their hams on both sides of the hall in rows, for none are allowed to sit crossed-legged in presence of the Sophy.

Before the company were now set little tables, on which were placed all kinds of sweetmeats and confections, and before the ambassador was laid a golden calianne or tobacco-pipe.

The music continued playing, and the mufty still continued reading; but everything else was very silent.

In the mean time pure water, iced, was brought in golden basins to drink. But after that unsatisfying refreshment, an hour elapsed before the banquet appeared, brought in by a number of servants who carried the dishes in large square baskets in their hands.

The entertainment consisted mostly of rice boiled with butter, fowls, mutton, boiled and roasted lamb. The whole was served in large gold or china dishes, and placed in the baskets, which stood on a long cloth spread above the carpet. According to the custom of the country, every one ate with his fingers. There were large thin cakes of bread which answered as napkins. They drink sherbet and iced water; there was wine in the old days, but the present Shah is a devout Mahometan.

The banquet over, the audience ended, much, one would think to the satisfaction of the ambassador and his suite, who no doubt thoroughly enjoyed the privilege of stretching their legs to their full extent.

As a sequel, the Shah sends a present to the ambassador of the golden pipe he had used at court; he also sends twenty large dishes of solid gold, filled with variety of sweetmeats. These dishes were left at the ambassador's lodgings for six weeks or more, and the ambassador began to imagine they were intended to be kept, or had been forgotten; but they were at last demanded and restored. Each dish weighed about thirty pounds. If our author's statement is correct, here was about 20,000*l.* worth of gold lying unowned for six weeks, which says something, at all events, for the honesty of the neighbourhood.

One day, soon after the audience, the ambassador wishes to go a hunting, that he may see the country about Ispahan; but an officer of the court desires him to put off his proposed expedition, as this day the Shah is about to visit his country-house in company with his ladies, on which occasions it is death to be seen near the place where the court passes. 'A crier is previously dispatched to warn the inhabitants,' who keep close within their houses in fear and trembling. This reminds us also of the *Arabian Nights*.

After sundry other audiences, the Shah seems to have grown tired of the expense of entertaining his guests, and to have politely requested the ambassador to take his departure. The ambassador was not over eager to leave, feeling probably like a schoolboy going

back to his task, but after receiving the Shah's gifts on departure could not in conscience remain any longer.

On their return, they found the towns through which they passed much infected by the plague, and several deaths occurred among the ambassador's suite. They wintered at Shemakha, and arrived at St. Petersburg on the 30th of the following December, after an absence of three years.

Tsar Peter, at all events, had not been idle in the time; the appearances of things were so changed in that space, that it was difficult to imagine that the city was the same that they had left. Peter was satisfied with the result of the expedition. Let us hope you will be also.

*Note on the Lamb Plant.* It may be interesting here to note the account given by a modern author of this curious fable. M. Erman in his *Siberian Travels*, vol. i. p. 111, English edition, says: 'It appears to me quite certain that the story of the zoophytic plant, called Baránez or lamb plant (formed as a diminutive from Baran, a sheep), originated in some embellished account of the cotton plant. Herberstein relates it at full length, and unchanged, just as he had heard it; the astronomer Chappe d'Auteroche afterwards added some misconceptions, which evidently arose from his imperfect acquaintance with the Russian language.

'Herberstein gives the statement of a Russian, in Latin: "He has seen (in the neighbourhood of the Caspian sea) a seed, a little larger and rounder than the seed of a melon, from which, if planted in the earth, arises a certain thing like a lamb, five palms in height, . . . which is called in their language Boranez, that is, little lamb; it has a very fine fleece, which many in these regions use to go round the covering of their head." The German edition of Herberstein (Basil, 1563) adds, that "the Boranez has a head, eyes, ears, and all the limbs like a sheep." But it mentions correctly "*the very fine fleece which the people of that country commonly make use of to pad their caps withal.*" This is the ordinary use which the Tatar tribes in general make of cotton at the present day.'

FREDERICK TALBOT.



## THE BROKEN HEART

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[There is a superstition amongst many of the seafaring people of England that fairy bells are heard when lover, husband, or relative is returning from some sea expedition; but, alas, they often give an aerial peal to deceive, as in the following poem.]

### I.

His voice was sweet, his words were fair;  
Would that his love had ne'er been spoken;  
Would that the pole-star heard my prayer,  
In words, as now, in anguish broken!  
Would that the awful Greenland gales  
Could drown my sighs! for then, O then,  
I should be where my Alick sails,  
And share the fate of daring men.  
Would I were in that churning sea,  
Where glassy icebergs, slowly moving,  
Might threaten death to him and me!  
But what is death when mad with loving?  
O Alick, why those whispers low,  
Those honey'd words, those soft entreatings?  
For far away, midst ice and snow,  
Thou wilt forget our summer meetings.

### II.

His voice was sweet, his words were fair;  
O, how I pray'd him ne'er to leave me!  
He only smooth'd my streaming hair;  
Said he, 'My love, thy fears deceive thee;  
Trust me, my Annie, soon will come  
The happy days when peace and plenty  
Shall be the gifts of ice and foam:  
We cannot wed with coffers empty.'  
'O yes,' I cried, 'I'd wed thee now,  
And work or starve, to stay thy going!'  
He only kiss'd my throbbing brow:  
Says he, 'My love, the wind is blowing;

The southern breeze creeps up the lea ;  
See, on yon cliff the pines are bending ;  
They point towards the frozen sea,  
Propitious winds and wishes sending.'

## III.

' Ah, Alick darling, say not so ;  
Thou wrongly read'st the warning motion :  
It says, " Let not thy lover go,  
There's death around the frozen ocean."  
Thou hearest how the curlews scream,  
In echo to the dreadful warning.'  
He only said, ' 'Tis but a dream—  
I must away ere break of morning ;  
But when in spring thou hear'st the sound  
Of magic bells above thee ringing,  
Know that the whaler, homeward bound,  
From off her prow the spray is flinging.'  
His boat sped o'er the seething surge,  
The wind flung back my wild cries—scoffing ;  
With strong and cruel pulls they urge  
The craft that bears him to the offing.

## IV.

But when I hear the eerie chimes,  
They'll tell me that my lad's returning ;  
Yet O, the dreary, dreary times,  
With hope so cold and love so burning.  
The wintry months go slowly past,  
I listen for the faeries' pealing,  
I watch for every spar and mast,  
Away from home for ever stealing.  
And mother frets, and father's sad ;  
They deem me daft thus ever sighing :  
O, could I, as a sailor lad,  
Across the Arctic seas be flying !  
For then, O then, the scalding tear  
That burns my cheek would not be flowing ;  
For I should sail with Alick dear,  
Close to his heart when blasts are blowing.

## V.

The maniac windmill whirls its arms,  
Like some weird giant winds defying ;  
The sea-birds scream their shrill alarms ;  
The day in streaks of amber's dying ;



## THE BROKEN HEART

The waves are swashing on the strand,  
Or in the booming caverns roaming :  
Anon the tide leaves bare the sand,  
And weedy pools reflect the gloaming.  
The coast is barren, stern, and sad  
As those dark shores where he is roving ;  
And yet they wonder I am mad—  
Mad with the strain of over-loving !  
But hark ! I hear the elfin bells !—  
Ah, Alick, soon these arms will fold thee—  
In rippling chime their music swells,  
And rings, '*He comes !*' as Alick told me.

## VI.

' Ah, yes, he comes ;' but o'er the sea  
The tempest shrieks in mad commotion ;  
The lightning darts along the lee,  
And melts in one the sky and ocean.  
Alas ! those tongues of molten steel  
Light up a wreck on breakers driven,  
And on the deck pale spectres kneel  
And breathe their last despair to Heaven.  
The while—how strange !—those fairy bells  
Steal softly o'er the foaming water ;  
From out the din their music swells,  
Like rippling flutes midst war and slaughter.  
But in the shore a pale corpse lies  
With fond arms round, no more to sever ;  
And on the gale this requiem flies,  
' In death my Alick's mine, for ever.'

SYDNEY WHITING.

## KATE'S ENGAGEMENT

BY M. CECIL HAY, AUTHOR OF 'HIDDEN PERILS,' ETC.

### CHAPTER I. BOUND FOR FIVE YEARS.

*June 12, 1865.* My sister Rachel's crisp little tea-cakes—Leonard's favourites—were done, as she said, 'to a turn,' and I hovered over them, endeavouring unobserved to purloin the nicest.

'If you and Leonard are really going to drive to Kynance this evening, Kate,' Rachel said, tacitly foiling my efforts, 'we had better have tea at once. While I make it, you run and call Leonard. You generally know where to find him.'

Yes, I generally know where to find him, even if I don't happen—as I happen whenever I can—to be with him. I know then that he is resting on the old stone seat at the orchard gate, and I join him as gladly as I always join my dear lame brother. But then I forget to tell him that the tea is ready. I lay upon his hand the rose I have gathered in the porch, and then sit down beside him. What an afternoon it is! I want Leonard to talk to me about it, but he does not, so I sit as silent as himself, though not so tired nor so still. A lazy blackbird, high in the larch opposite, is enjoying the delicious restfulness of the summer evening. I can see his little dusky form among the green-tressed branches, but not a note does he feel brisk enough to utter, though all around him bird answers song to song. The great brown bees dive in and out of the golden bells of the laburnum, humming busily to show they really are at work, and to discomfit the yellow butterfly on the honeysuckle leaves below, who will not be discomfited, but blinks and spreads his wings in the sunshine, and looks as if he understood best the task of his little life—as of course he does. My eyes wander among the orchard shadows, looking in vain for an apple ripe enough to gather. Then I catch sight of a bunch of pinks growing on the weather-stained old garden wall, and I try to calculate how soon they will fringe it all round. Before I have arranged that, an active wasp selects my nose as an object of attack, and I can only dismiss him by exertions which are quite unsuited to the weather, and entirely incapacitate me from pursuing the problem. My eyes wander back into the old-fashioned garden, every flower in which I love so well. The swift cloud-shadows glide coolingly over the scarlet flame of the geraniums. The old house throws its own brown shadow on the turf, but its line of gabled windows blink brilliantly in the evening sunshine. There is a mellow warmth and peace and homeliness about it; and I say,



just as if the old, old thought has come to me then for the first time 'Leonard, I wonder whether you and Rachel love this dear old home of ours just *quite* as well as I do.'

My brother smiles a Yes for his part of the wonder, and I know he might answer Yes for Rachel too. Just as I think of her, she comes out into the porch and calls us. I rise at once, saying back my answer merrily, and Leonard puts his arm in mine. How pleasant it is to be able to give even a little help to those we love! I often wonder what I would *not* do to brighten the life of my invalid brother, or add a single joy to Rachel's. But then I always stop that thought, because I have not been tried, and my strength may not be deep and steadfast.

How Leonard did enjoy those cakes! and Rachel was as glad to see it as if the little scene were new, and had not been enacted a hundred times before. Just as we were driving off, amid Rachel's last instructions to Leonard to put on his waterproof when we stop at Kynance, papa rode up among us on his beautiful young horse. He stopped us while he gave Leonard various orders for next day. He was going to dine in Helstone, he said, and might not be home until to-morrow night.

'You must be at the manor all the morning,' he said, 'though the Squire *may* see about things himself.—Now, Rachel, come and give me a snack before I dress. The maids never get me what I like unless you manage it. Come.—Hold your reins higher, Kate. I can't you can condescend to drive such an animal as that, drive him respectfully.'

'Papa seems to think we ought not to be content without driving thoroughbreds as he does, Leonard,' I said, as Brownie walked sedately out of the yard.

'Going away again!' sighed Leonard. 'It is the same day after day. How I wish he would stay at home more, or that I were more fit to take his place!'

'Never mind, Len,' I said as cheerfully as possible, for what was the use of spoiling this drive for him? 'The Squire would soon get another agent if he felt that papa neglected *his* business, and that's more important than our own farm, isn't it? Mr. Kevern is so prompt and wise himself, that we may be sure he would not tolerate any neglect in a subordinate.'

'He wouldn't approve of it, of course,' Leonard said; 'but he is so generous, that he may be patient when he is not satisfied, and the patience must wear out. I've often heard him talk very seriously to father, and that has always done good; but things soon go back into their old groove.'

Brownie was trotting now, and looking as self-satisfied as he always does when he gets on the bridle-way across the heath. Just from there we could see the chimneys of Trecothic, the old manor-

house where Mr. Keverne lives with his sister and her little girl. While I looked at it, and Brownie tossed his head and drew us swiftly over the springy turf without the aid of whip or reins, I thought of the Squire's long undemonstrative kindness to us; of Mrs. Grey, and of how, for months, she had been wishing me to be her little girl's governess, and teach her for the few years that she will remain here in Cornwall before her husband leaves the army, and they all settle in Scotland. I thought of little Rose; of her warm love for me, and her shy, winning patronage of Leonard; and while I thought these things a feeling almost like anger sprang up in my heart against my father.

'O Leonard, isn't it a real sin,' I said, 'for those who have a certain duty to perform not to perform it, especially when it is owing to one who is kind and good and forbearing? Papa is clever, and understands the work he has to do. I cannot think how he can neglect it. I don't think I could, Len.'

'Wait till you are tried, dear,' he said gently.

'But why should my purpose change when I am tried?—I wish I had learned farming,' I said presently, 'that I might have helped you, Leonard.'

'Hush, dear; it is reminding me of my own uselessness. Let me think I do all that my father expects me to do—all that you so often do for me. O little Kate, what should I be without you?'

'Think of Mrs. Grey wanting to separate us, Len!' I said, winking very hard from some unpleasant sensation in my eyes as we rolled on and met the seaborne breeze.

'Yes, she was urging her old request again this morning. Rachel will not tell you because it worries her, and she knows it worries you. I'm sorry for Mrs. Grey, because she is so anxious to keep Rose with her here, and does so dread the idea of a stranger to teach her. Yet I have no patience with her when she wishes you to live entirely there. Why, Kate, I cannot fancy the dear old farm without you!'

A whim came over me to ask Leonard which he would rather have—the dear old farm without me, or me without the dear old farm. Of course he laughed heartily at the question.

'It isn't as if I *needed* to work so, Leonard, is it?' I asked wistfully, before I dismissed the subject. 'Then I suppose I should be willing; but now— Well, don't let us talk of it any more, just to spoil our evening. We shall have a glimpse of the sea in a minute.'

So we watched for it, driving on over the green and purple heath, and knowing exactly at what spot we should see it first. How beautiful it was! The wonderful rocks, standing alone or in clusters on the sand (one, a perfect and beautiful arch, stands upon the beach without support and without companion); the water, with the deep vivid green and blue, rarely seen but on this very coast; the



breeze, fresh and strong straight from the sea, not yet laden with even the moorland scents. We did not leave the pony-carriage because Leonard is not fit for climbing; but I drove Brownie and drove him up as far out upon the cliff as I could, beside the little wooden houses built for the accommodation of tourists. There was no sound but the mellow splash of the water on the shore, and the lowing of cattle in the distance. To me the scene was grandly yet peacefully beautiful, and I was sorry when Leonard pointed out to me a gentleman sketching just beyond us.

'It is Mr. Etheridge,' he whispered; 'the artist who is staying here.'

I don't exactly remember how it was managed, but Mr. Etheridge joined us presently, and brought his picture up to the carriage to show Leonard. It was not until Leonard told him that I had sketched that very view in water-colours, that he spoke directly to me. Might he see it some day, he asked; and I'm sure I answered nervously, because of the inquisitive, intent look in his eyes when he spoke to me. I think it must have been a good while that we stayed there talking; Brownie patiently sniffing the sea air and watching the cormorants; Leonard leaning back on his cushions, with almost a healthy flush on his delicate face; Mr. Etheridge leaning on his side of the little carriage, but looking across, and talking most to me. Then quite suddenly the clouds swept over the moor behind us, and broke above us in the swift-drenching rain to which visitors at Kynance soon get accustomed. We would not consent to wait and shelter in Mr. Etheridge's room, but we *did* consent to his next arrangement. He helped Leonard on with his waterproof, lent me one of his own, and settled me on the seat behind with an umbrella, then took the place next Leonard, and drove us rapidly back across the moor. The rain ceased before we reached home, and Mr. Etheridge proposed to leave us; but Leonard, in his gentle cordial way, persuaded him to come on to the farm, and to stay and sup with us. He was charmed with the house; and when we took him to the old stone seat under the laburnum, and Leonard told him it was my favourite idling-place, he promised Leonard a sketch of it with me in it, if I would consent.

It was late when he went away, and then he refused to be driven, but walked quite slowly and lingeringly into the gray mist. Rache says Mr. Etheridge kept Leonard out far too late loitering about the place. But I was with them, and I ought to have thought of it. I did ask Leonard to come in; but on another night I should have brought him in, as he always lets me do when I am earnest about it. I wonder whether I was *not* earnest about it to-night.

August 31, 1865. Mr. Etheridge and papa have been out together all day, and after dinner we had a pleasant musical evening—except papa, who slept tranquilly throughout; and indeed, I ought



MR. ETHERIDGE INTRODUCES HIMSELF.

Edmund Evans, sc.

J. A. Pasquier, del.





to say except Rachel, who would perform only the part of indifferent audience. I cannot imagine why she dislikes Mr. Etheridge. She owns he is very handsome, but she will own no more. Even Leonard, too, will not grow to care any more for him than he did on that night, nearly three months ago, when we saw him first upon the beach at Kynance. Leonard says he is listless and purposeless; but then how can that be? Can a man be an artist if he is purposeless? Besides, we never see Mr. Etheridge really at work, because he only professes to be idling away this summer painting our beautiful coast. After that, he goes to Italy, to study hard for three or four years. Then,—then I daresay he will be a great painter; one whose footsteps will 'echo through the corridors of time.'

When he went back to-night to his funny little rooms at Kynance, papa went with him, preparatory to an excursion they are to make to-morrow to the Scilly Isles. Papa is the only one who seems to value Mr. Etheridge's society. I mean he does so, and Rachel and Leonard do not.

As Rachel and I went on our nightly tour, inspecting all the locks and bolts on the ground-floor, we were startled by a long light rapping at the front door. Was not I astonished to see the Squire walk in when I opened it! He came into the hall, where our flickering candle was the only light, and he stood there for a few minutes chatting, while I wondered and wondered whether he really could have come at such a time merely for the purpose of doing this. So grave and strong and tall he looked in the dimness; with that quiet fearlessness about him which always makes me feel that if I had done wrong at any time, and he told me of it with that same quiet fearlessness in his face and manner, I should feel most terribly humiliated. I *think* so.

'When would Mr. Carew be at home?'

He asked the question quite easily and naturally, yet I fancied too that he looked anxious as he asked it.

Rachel told him, to-morrow night she *hoped*.

'To-morrow night!' he repeated, and I'm sure his tone was vexed. 'Will you ask him to come up to me as soon as he returns—directly he returns? Will you remember this, Miss Carew?'

While Rachel promised, he shook hands with her in his kindest way; then turned to the door, which I was opening.

'Good-night,' he said, but he forgot to offer me his hand; 'shut the door behind me, and lock it safely. It is a gusty night. Close it at once; and open it to no one else to-night, my child.'

I laughed a little, wondering what visitors we were to expect after eleven o'clock. But I was very soon serious again, for I never like Mr. Keverne speaking to me as if I were a child. Eighteen is not at all so very young, yet I cannot impress him with that fact. Mr. Etheridge must needs aggravate me too in the same way; for



he said, when he sketched me on the old stone seat, that he would rather paint me as I should be in a few years' time. When I had locked the door behind the Squire, I told Rachel what he had said—she had stood back for fear of the wind blowing out her candle—and she looked as demure as possible over it.

'If Mr. Keverne said that,' she whispered, 'he must fear something which we don't understand. O Kate, kind and patient as I am, we cannot hope for others to be so forbearing, and papa is more idle and extravagant than ever. I'm sure he is gone away now on purpose to avoid something. I can see that his letters have been frightening him a good deal lately.'

'Surely if he had feared anything here,' I said, 'he would have stayed at home to face it.'

But Rachel only shook her head at that, and kissed me without a word.

Sept. 1, 1865. I think it nearly always happens that when an unexpected sorrow falls upon us, it swoops straight down upon some hour of wonderful happiness or peace. I can well remember when a holiday Leonard and I were enjoying years and years ago; the old garden walls were echoing back our song and laughter, when Rachel suddenly came home to us, and in the midst of our joy (increased tenfold by seeing her) gathered us in her arms and told us we were motherless. I can remember what a merry day we were spending at Kynance when Leonard fell! How he and I had climbed a rock which we had often longed to climb, and stood together wrapped in the splendour of the sunset light, watching the beautiful pictures in the sky, and laughing happily to think how we would surprise Rachel by telling her where we had been, when—one instant's heedlessness, and my brother lost the health and power which never can be his again. So it has been again to-day, for our grief came down upon an hour of perfect peace and rest. Leonard and I were standing together in the porch, waiting for Brownie. On the far horizon the upland touched the blue unclouded sky, while the bright white clouds bent above us. The beams from the low sun glanced across the meadows, then lay and blended into one of many purple tints upon the moor. A great laden wagon came from the harvest-field, and wound on towards Trecothic. A crowd of excited swallows darted from the eaves above us, and wheeled round and round with a soft rushing music.

'They will be going soon,' said Leonard, idly watching them.

'Aren't they happy, Len? Aren't they glad to go? Look surely the schools must be breaking up, and the elders packing or the young ones wouldn't be so mad.'

Leonard's eyes followed mine. The light leaves of the clematis rested on his bright hair as he leaned opposite me; he looked so happy and so well that I didn't dread his riding away to take papa's

place at Trecothick, as I often did dread it. An ugly click of the side gate, and Leonard and I both turned to see who was coming. A few words falling coldly in the sunshine, and then it seemed as if the dear old home were gone beyond my reach. But all I knew distinctly was that Leonard had fainted.

I had just written so far to-night, when I heard the sound of a rattle thrown lightly up at my window. Without looking out, I knew who stood below; and unfastening my door, I crept noiselessly down the stairs and out into the garden, stooping among the flowers close up to the house because the moon was nearly at the full, and shed a tell-tale light upon the grass.

'Are they here—in possession already?' my father asked, in a hoarse whisper, when I joined him.

I told him the men (whom a London creditor had sent) were sleeping in the room near which we stood; and so in silence we walked on, still keeping in the shadow.

'Why not come in, papa?'

But he shook his head decisively at that.

'I cannot come in, Kate,' he said, his tone a little more soft and slow than usual. 'Nothing can be saved for us, and I cannot wait to see it done.'

'Papa, hadn't you better tell Mr. Keverne?'

He moved away from me with quick impatience.

'You don't know what you are speaking of, child,' he said. 'He has helped me too often. In very shame I could not seek his help again; he said too that it never should be given again. No, must all go this time, and the sooner we get out of the country the better. Even if this fellow could be appeased, there are plenty more creditors to start forward. How's Leonard?'

'Better, papa,' I answered; those words thrilling through me—'The sooner we get out of the country the better.'

'And Rachel?'

'Almost broken-hearted—poor Rachel! O father, father, what can we do?' And I clung to him as if he really could have helped us all even then.

'There's nothing to do,' he answered moodily. 'The Fates have been against me all along, and *they* won't change.'

I could not persuade him to come in, even to rest; but I fetched him some sandwiches and wine, and I watched him take them; for we had left the shadow now, being no longer afraid of being seen by the men. And it all came into my thoughts and my mind and my heart while I watched him, grieving to see his harassed face, and grieving to think of the old home going from him. I did not tell him of my thought. I only made him promise to stay in Penzance until he received a note from home, sent by a trusty messenger. He



did promise, and described what papers I was to send to him. Then we kissed each other, and he went away. I wish to-morrow morning would dawn. I dread the four hours through which I must lie awake and think, before the household is astir again. I will go and see if Leonard is still sleeping, as he was when I left him two hours ago.

Sept. 2, 1865. Has this been more a sad day or a happy one for me? I cannot tell; I don't like even to wonder about it. When papa kissed me at his bedroom door just now, and called me 'his own brave-hearted little Kate,' I felt that was reward enough; but when Leonard drew my face down upon his pillow, and whispered just those ten quiet little words, I said to myself I would always recall them if I ever felt anything but grateful in my heart for this day's work: 'God bless this act of yours, dear, to us all!'

How earnestly he said them! O, surely they went up to heaven and pleaded for me. From this day, for five full long years to come, I am to be Rose Grey's governess, and live at the Manor with her and her mother and her uncle, and without Leonard and Rachel—No; I will not look among the shadows on the picture.

Early this morning I went to Trecothick, and asked Mrs. Grey and the Squire if they would buy-in just the things at home which papa and Leonard and Rachel were fond of, making it possible for them to live on there; and in return take me to be Rose's governess for five years without salary, that I might so repay the debt. At first they would not hear of this arrangement; but when they saw how deeply and sadly I was in earnest, they agreed: at least the Squire did, for the arrangement is to be made between him and myself, as it is he who will help us. Mrs. Grey said that her unwillingness to consent was caused by her wish for it to be. She was afraid of being too ready to accept what I offered only on impulse. If they could know how long and seriously I thought of it last night they would not talk of impulse.

So once more the Squire has helped my father; but he says it is no loan or gift this time, but just payment for very valuable services, and he means mine. O, I hope I may serve them faithfully as well as gratefully! We thought Mr. Keverne would just buy the things papa and Rachel would choose, pay off the most pressing creditors, and let papa keep on the farm. But he did far, far more, and still seemed as if the debt were not sufficiently repaid. The farm is to be ours on a lease of five years, papa is still to be his agent, and every debt is to be paid in full; and my father, astonished at the Squire's generosity, has determined not to be careless or extravagant any more. He says he knows this is caused by his idleness and self-indulgence, and that it shall never happen again.

They all laughed heartily at my whim, but I would not be content without signing a proper witnessed agreement with the Squire *about this*. I don't think, though, that he laughed himself; and

before he gave me the paper which he brought down to-night, he asked me very gravely if I was steadfast in my wish to sign it, and to seriously enter upon this as a solemn and binding engagement.

'Quite steadfast,' I answered, frankly meeting his searching eyes.

'Five years is a long time,' he said, still keeping back the pen from me. 'In those five years, Kate, you will grow from girlhood to womanhood. Do you feel that your purpose will not change—as other things will change?'

No, I knew it would not, and I took the paper eagerly. 'Now,' I said, laughing as I passed it on to Leonard, 'now I am bound—bound for five years.'

Then quite suddenly there came into my heart the deepest sense of what this friend had done for us, of what he was doing, and, most of all, of *how* he was doing it. There came the consciousness of how different my life would be during these coming years if he were not—just what he was; and I turned to him with stupid broken words of thanks. I think—I think he looked hurt and pained by them.

Papa and I lingered a few minutes with him in the porch. A strange beautiful sky stretched over us. In the soft distant gray the moon rode among dainty little clouds edged with bright silver; the stars shone down upon us, calm and tender. I think it was the quiet beauty of the night which made me feel so unaccountably sad.

Once more, and very earnestly, the Squire spoke to me before he left. It was not too late then, he said; should he give me back my bond? He would rather trust me without that, and I need not look upon myself as bound.

No, I would not take it; I would rather feel he held that paper. But I suppose I did not look so glad as I felt, because, when I went back into the lamplit room, Leonard looked at me curiously. 'Is anything the matter, dear?'

'Of course something is the matter, Len.'—When he questioned me so suddenly and anxiously, how could I help but answer him?—'I feel my troubles, like Mrs. Gummidge, and they make me contrary.'

## CHAPTER II.

### PAUL'S SCHEME.

Sept. 11, 1865, *Trecothick Manor*. This is the first day I have dated from here, though I have been Rose's governess now for a week. My father is steady and industrious now, and surely it will last; surely he will never go back to the old sad ways. I am very happy here; as happy as I could be in any home that was not the dear old farm. Mrs. Grey often asks Rachel to come here, but she will not yet. Leonard says he wishes he could be as wise. I say I am glad he is more foolish. Yet perhaps his coming does make it a little more hard for me, just at first.



Mrs. Grey is most kind to me, most gentle and considerate ; and as for little Rose, she has already won her way into my very heart. Mr. Keverne, of course, is good to me, in just that old way of his, as if it would not be natural for him to be anything else. Mr. Etheridge comes to the Manor sometimes, but it does not seem to me that they are ever really glad to see him. Yet what reason could they have for not being so? Even Mrs. Grey, who judges every one else so leniently, calls him indolent and self-engrossed. I never heard Mr. Keverne say anything against him until to-night, and then I can hardly say that he spoke against him; for he only laughingly quoted that vague line of Tennyson's, 'A young man will be wiser by and by.' He speaks just as if he were twenty years older than Mr. Etheridge, yet his sister says he is only six-and-thirty. Still he is so different from Mr. Etheridge that I daresay he never will be able to appreciate him. He—Mr. Etheridge I mean—came to-day to bid us good-bye; such a long good-bye—for four years! After he was gone to-night, the Squire asked me once more, and more than ever gravely, if I repented signing that bond with him. I could only laugh. Surely he might see I do not, when I am so happy and content. Then he asked me whether Mr. Etheridge knew that I had bound myself to my present engagement for five years. I told him Yes, Mr. Etheridge knew it quite well, and had often laughed about it. But I thought the question rather odd, too.

March 14, 1869. Since the day of my father's disappearance a year ago, I have only written a few words now and then. What days had I to tell of but miserable and humiliating ones? and why live any of them twice over? The shock brought with it a deep, deep shame, that was worse than all. That he *could* again have abused the trust placed in him, after the Squire's long forbearance and unacknowledged generosity! Then to go quietly away himself, beyond the reach of blame or punishment, and leave Rachel and Leonard to bear it all! for *he* could not know that Mr. Keverne would leave us nothing to bear but shame for our father, and would actually give his agency to Leonard. Think of it! to my dear boy, who can do so little! Ah, but the Squire knows that what he does, he does with all the strength of his heart; and he not only helps him himself, but has engaged an assistant for him, who is strong and active and clever. And the Squire represents the work always as Leonard's, only Leonard knows who does the chief; and, O, it is good to hear him talk of Mr. Keverne, though he says that, when he tries to thank him, the Squire looks really hurt—just as he used to do, I suppose, when I would try to thank him in that miserable time a year ago. So now I just thank him quietly in my heart. Nearly four of my five years have passed—have passed as happily I felt sure they would do; brightened by daily, hourly gifts, which those who give them do not even know they give. \* \* I almost fo

got to record one fact: Mr. Etheridge is in England again—in Cornwall too. He was in church this morning. I think he is handsomer than ever; quite different he looked from any one else in church to-day. I daresay he will come here to-morrow.

March 27, 1869. How changed everything is to me since Paul Etheridge came back! There is a wonderful joy in my heart; a wide delicious sunshine on my way. He says he came down to Cornwall again not to recall the old scenes but the old faces; and when he says it he makes me feel exactly what he means. He is going to paint my portrait. I wonder how he can care to do so after spending years among those marvellous pictures he tells me of. I wonder whether I *ought* to idle away so much time as he will require for this. He has a month to spend here, resting from his long hard studies; then he has an order to execute for a Spanish picture, and that will take him to Spain for a year. He dreads the loneliness, he says; but why should his busy life in Spain be lonelier than his rooms at Kynance? I will not ask him this again, because when I asked before, he told me what—what I think could hardly have been quite true.

April 19, 1869. My picture is finished, and Leonard is so anxious for it—offers any price within his power, poor Leonard! It is more like my idea of Rosalind in *As you like it* than my idea of myself. I told Paul he forgot whom he was painting, because we talked so much about Shakespeare and the musical glasses. How seriously he took my words! It was just as my last sitting ended, and we were criticising the picture. I was telling him that my eyes were never so beautiful as those, when, quite suddenly, he turned my face and met them with his own, telling me he would give Leonard the portrait if I would give him the original.

I cannot write what he said, nor what I answered, until I reminded him of my engagement with Mrs. Grey. He only laughed at the idea of that being really binding, as—as I guessed he would; but I know it is binding. There are only a few months to run now, but I will keep my part of the agreement, as Mr. Keverne has kept his. Could I break my solemn word, even for Paul's pleading, and in all the world what could there be for me harder to resist than that? Will it ever be harder than it was to-day? I can hear now the entreaty in his voice—its passionate, vehement entreaty. I wish he had not asked me to break my promise. I wish he would trust me, and come back for me when I am free to go with him. But he will not hear of that. He says he cannot bear that year in Spain without me. I could trust him for years. I wish men were as patient and trustful as women are. Rachel says that, when they are so at all, they are ten times more so than women. Perhaps so. I daresay Mr. Keverne would be, if any one ever tried him. But Paul could not. O, what would I not give to be ready to go with



him where and when he will, without feeling that I act meanly and deceitfully! Five months yet—one hundred and thirty-six days. I have counted them many times. One hundred and thirty-six days.

April 21, 1869. I have told Paul—O, what else could I say in answer to his pleading, loving words?—that, if Mr. Keverne and Mrs. Grey will release me, I will go with him to Spain. In the old church on the cliffs at the Lizard he wants us to be married this very month. He is in the library now speaking to Mr. Keverne, and I am waiting for him. O, suppose Mr. Keverne says I cannot be released unless I voluntarily break my solemn word, and make my written promise a lie! But he cannot say it; he is too generous. He *could* not refuse me, now that my last year is drawing to an end. \* \*

Paul came up the stairs with such a quick and angry step that I knew what he had to say to me even before I saw him. Mr. Keverne followed him more slowly.

‘Mr. Keverne will not release you, Kate,’ he said, a passion in his eyes which spoke even more contemptuously than the tone. ‘Mr. Keverne considers you have signed away your independence in this matter. The legality or illegality of such a deed does not disturb his notions of honour.’

I looked from Paul to Mr. Keverne, my cheeks burning. His firm and quiet answer to my mute question was a decisive negative; and the cold refusal fell as sorely on my hope as on Paul’s scornful vehemence.

Mr. Etheridge had only a few months to wait, the Squire said; surely that could not dismay him. Mr. Etheridge had always known of the engagement between Mrs. Grey and Miss Carew, and it was strange that he could tempt her to break her word. Did he understand that, tempted so, Miss Carew herself wished to cancel it?

I answered Yes, but very timidly, because his words, though they hurt me, did not seem wrong or unkind.

Hotly Paul broke in, Would *he* like to wait a year for the desire and consummation of any hope of his? He would scarcely be so cruelly hard on others if he had ever been tried himself.

I saw the Squire’s lip shake a little, but he answered as steadily as before,

‘There’s no cruelty in my decision, Kate, though perhaps you will never understand that; no cruelty, Etheridge. With such an end in view, surely you will have patience and courage for these few months.’

Then he left us, and Paul paced the room impatiently. I forget all he urged. He said Mr. Keverne had no right to keep that most illegal bond, especially as I was not of age when I signed it; that it was madness for me to care what he said when he had no authority over me, no claim upon me; that he was a grasping, selfish

tyrant; that it was only Paul himself in all the world to whom I ought to listen, and that I *should* do so, if I loved him as he loved me.

And then—because I said this was not so—he took me suddenly in his arms, and whispered what I must do *because* I loved him. But I could not listen; O, I could not! I hated myself for feeling so glad and proud of what he said; I hated myself for feeling so ready to do his bidding—so strong in my love for him, so weak in other ways. I clasped my hands upon my ears at last, and left him; but his words haunt me still.

April 23, 1869. I wish no one in the house would notice me. Are they wondering why Paul left so hurriedly yesterday? are they wondering that I do not grieve more? Quite early yesterday he came and bade good-bye to us all; and when the Squire, in his kindly cordial way, begged him to come to Trecothie again if he possibly could through those months of waiting, I felt my face grow white as death. But Paul answered with a few gay words of thanks. How could he? I went with him down the park, and we parted at the gates without one sob or tear. I watched him ride up the narrow lane, where the trees met above his head. I watched his horse step on over the bars of sunlight and the bars of shade. I watched him out upon the heath again, galloping on towards where a bank of soft white clouds hung low on the horizon. Then I came back to the house, and Rose and I had some rare games together. In the evening, when the sun was setting, and before the lamps were lighted in the house, I went into the long shadowy drawing-room. Mr. Keverne, at a distant window, sat idly looking out. He often now sits in that idle thoughtful way between the lights. Mrs. Grey caught enough of the fading daylight to go on with her knitting. I sat down at the first window, with my back almost turned to her. Minute after minute I waited, gathering ease and indifference into my voice; then, turning a little, I asked her if she would allow me a holiday on the morrow. For the first time in all the years I have been here, she hesitated to grant my request, and my heart began to beat both in fear and rebellion. But just then the Squire, turning from his seat a little to look at us, spoke pleasantly to his sister.

'By all means let us have a holiday to-morrow, dear. I shall be away till late, so you will want the little one's company all to yourself. Let us have a holiday by all means.'

After that, Mrs. Grey quite willingly gave me the liberty I wanted. I wish the night had not to come first. One's thoughts sometimes—some thoughts—trouble one in solitude and in the dark.

May 21, 1869. I have not written a word for four whole weeks, because I felt that I could not do so unless I passed over that one day when I begged a holiday for such an unsuspected purpose, and



it seemed mean to do that. Now I will write it. I am going presently—very soon—to leave off keeping a diary, but I won't leave off just because I am too cowardly to write that day.

Rose and I spent rather a sad—at any rate a very quiet—morning together. My heart yearned oddly to the child—the little one who has been my close companion for nearly five years. The clinging love seemed most sweet and precious to me; and when I left her at the gate I had to hurry out of sight with the hot sharp tears rushing up into my eyes. From where I waited on the moor to catch the Helstone omnibus on its way from the Lizard, I could just see the black-and-white gables of the farm; so I shut my eyes while I listened for the wheels, for I dared not think of Leonard. He and Rachel would be at dinner now. I knew exactly where they would be sitting in the pleasant room, and how the scent of my violets would come through the windows and cling about them. Perhaps they were talking of me, or— No, I dared not think of that. How many years was it since Leonard and I had driven to Kynance on one summer evening, and seen Paul sketching? O, what a long, long time!

Almost before I was aware, the four fleet horses drew up beside me as I sat upon the heather, and I took my place in the omnibus. In a few minutes the road across the heath had turned, and I could not have seen the old farm gables if I had tried. At Helstone I took another omnibus on to Camborne station, and there I got quietly into an empty carriage, and knew that when I stopped next, Paul would meet me. Yet I turned my face on the arm of my seat, and tried not to think. I could not even look out on the familiar way, because it reminded me of those old journeys Leonard and I used to take once in every holiday; travelling grandly up to Truro together, with a very small box of clothes and a very large hamper of presents from the farm, to visit the old friend to whose house I was going now; from whose house I was to walk quietly away next morning, to meet Paul at the church where we were to be married.

At Truro station I looked out with one great searching glance which took in all the platform. In a moment Paul was beside me, glad and smiling.

'All right!' he whispered. 'Done well and cleverly, my dearest. We have nothing to fear now. No luggage to look after? What a blessing! Your friend has ordered all she thinks you will need, for we cannot venture to write for your boxes from Trecothick until to-morrow is over, and we are safely away. Come, love.'

Side by side we walked from the station; and there, just outside, a dog-cart waited, with a pair of horses. I felt the start Paul gave. I felt my own breath quicken when I saw it.

'Kate,' Mr. Keverne said, meeting us close beside it, and looking down gravely into my startled face, 'I am going back to Tre-

you had better come with me. You will be too late to turn omnibus to-night.'

My paltry courage staggered before him! The few defiant red were a great, great effort, and I know my eyes were miserable when I raised them to his face.

'Come, Kate?'

He would answer him then in sudden fearless passion. I was silent. I would never return with him.

'Mr. Etheridge,' said the Squire calmly, 'that it would be for you to go alone, and wait through these few months. But I know that Kate will not change while you are true; therefore I have no fear?'

He spoke, hotly and scornfully. I think even if we had been alone, he could scarcely have stayed his wrathful words. I could distinguish the Squire's, they were so low, but I heard

'...less you are afraid that the stories which have reached life abroad may reach her too when you are gone. If I had to tell her, I should have told before this night. You must take her back, and you know that the length of this depends upon yourself.'

'If I could but have comforted you then, when you looked so angry, and when your lips shook and could not frame a word, they would have uttered!'

'Come, Kate?' the Squire asked again, looking quickly at me. But I only stood close to Paul, whispering that I would leave him. Gradually he grew quiet and cold.

'Had better go, perhaps,' he said to me almost chillily. 'He seems to think we are both wholly and entirely in his

power,' said the Squire, and though his words were a little harsh, and I in my unutterable grief had turned my head away, I heard each one distinctly—'you know that is unalterable. It goes. Through the five months that you will wait, the blame of you shall pass my lips to her—no single word.' He laughed, a laugh which sounded moody and incredulous, and his face was different from what it had been when he met me a few minutes before.

'Good-bye, Kate,' he said; no longer fearless in his wrath, now looking scornfully at the Squire's sad grave eyes; 'good-bye, but the pain of parting blanched his lips as the words came; and I could not bear it, but crept closer, whispering, of love and sorrow, that I would be true to him always, whether he would or not.

'Parting is kindly arranged for us,' Paul said, laughing but still not looking beyond me, 'of course for *our* sakes.



Mr. Keverne uses his power most generously, Kate, and we will obey him as slavishly as he expects to be obeyed. He orders you to go back with him, and you shall go. He orders me to wait his pleasure, and I will wait.'

'Only for a little time, Paul,' I whispered, my voice shaking in my great grief; but I did not mind, because Mr. Keverne had gone out of hearing, and left us two alone now; 'and I will be so true.'

'No, only for a little time, my love. Good-bye.'

I drew away from Mr. Keverne's touch when he attempted to help me up to the seat beside his in the dog-cart; and shrank as far from him as I could through the drive, which lasted such a long, long time. I looked with aching eyes across the barren country, and counted the chimneys of the mines, which stood so bleak and desolate against the sky; and my thoughts went fast and far with Paul. I hated the drive, yet I was sorry when we reached the inn half-way, where the Squire called for his own rested horses, and left the hired ones he had been driving; and where he—just in his old firm quiet way—made me take the wine he brought me, and which I determined not to touch. The twilight gathered, deepened, and was hushed and silenced into night, before we felt our own beautiful scenery was around us again, and the dismal silent mines left behind. I could just dimly see the quiet figure sitting high beside me. I wished he would speak to me; would give me an opportunity of uttering a little of the anger and the pride which fought with the great sorrow at my heart. But he only drove me on silently and safely through the night. Over the moor at last; daintily the beautiful horses stepped on the short elastic turf. Was it really only this afternoon that I had sat here waiting? O, thank God for the darkness that lay upon the dear old home! Mr. Keverne bent his head a little against the bleak night wind, tilting his hat lower over his eyes—the gentle, fearless eyes. I was glad I could not read them when the horses drew up on the sweep at Trecothic, and Mrs. Grey came to the hall-door to meet her brother. With an easy little apology, he told her he had been detained, and so had detained me too; he had thought I might just as well drive home with him as walk. This he said aloud for his servants to hear; and then in a moment I understood, what I had not thought of before, his reason for driving without a groom.

I told Mrs. Grey the whole truth that night, of course. She spoke gently to me, though my own words were impatient and resentful. And then that strange and dreary day was over. I was back in my old place once more, and Paul was far away. That is, as I said, four weeks ago. I won't write anything more of it. I have heard from Paul. He is not going to work very hard on his Spanish picture, he says, because he has a whole year before him. He writes quite cheerfully, but says very hard things of Mr. Keverne.

## CHAPTER III.

## IS IT FREEDOM?

June 8, 1869. How hot it is! Leonard talks of beginning quire's harvest at once. It is fun to hear Rose demurely disagree with Leonard the management of her uncle's farm, and her own too; in which I think she takes even a greater interest. We spent this afternoon there—she and I; and it was so pleasant only that Rachel had heard some false story of Paul, just as false and improbable as those ridiculous tales people have whispered about his life in Italy, where he was all the time working so hard.

How wicked and unjust it is! How can Rachel listen—above all, how can she repeat them to me? Yet she does it so anxiously and tenderly that I can never blame her; can only contradict them with all my heart and strength. I wish Paul knew, and would hush for ever by a word of his own. He seems to be quite busy with his picture. I don't mind the shortness of his letters. I think of him working and remembering me; the beautiful picture hanging under his hand. I do not fret because he has only time to write so little to me. His words are so precious, that they satisfy me in any way, however few they are. There's Rose below the window crying for me. 'Coming, darling!' Not three months now, and the same voice will never rouse me from my thoughts, and woo me with its pleasures. What a wrench the parting will be! Mrs. Grey is very anxiously asking me to stay with them until they leave for Christmas, but I never will; the parting would be even harder than this, besides, I could not for many other reasons. O, after Mr. Grey's cruelty to me on that one day, I *never* could consent to stay longer than the time I am bound to stay. I always say that of myself, and I always mean it.

We have heard from papa. He says he is getting a rich man out of it! And he wants us to go out to Australia to him some day, but I hope he will come home instead. Rachel cannot bear the thought of going, and Leonard's love for the old dear home grows year by year. And mine? I don't know. I think it is a strange thing for me to have lived here so long, in the luxury of love and health and kindness; but I would go out to my father to-morrow if he said he wished it. I, who have committed his fault, and broken the trust of my employer.

June 21, 1869. Such a strange letter from Paul! What does he mean? Does he forget that I shall be free so soon? Does he forget how I whispered to him, when we parted, that I would be free?

I wish it had not come; I wish it had got lost in the post. July 18, 1869. It is all over, and I can only feel as if the world were full of false and shallow hearts. The paper came to Mr. Grey, but it was his sister who gave it to me, then left me that



I might be alone when I found the paragraph. *Married!* Married to a Spanish heiress! Paul, my own first love, to whom I would have been true for all my life! Is the world really full of hollow faithless hearts? These thoughts may seem wicked to me some day; but O, they come so readily, so naturally now. Who can ever again believe in? If I had been determined on that one day in Truro— No, my pride will not let me finish that thought. A week only this morning in church I was recalling Leonard's words to me, 'God bless this act of yours, dear, to us all!' I thought the words were earnest as a prayer, and so I leaned upon them half unconsciously. But have not the consequences of that act of mine been hard and cruel? How could the Squire have kept me in bondage and let Paul go?

*July 25, 1869.* No one here speaks to me of Paul; no one angers or hurts me by presuming that I am either suffering or fretting. Yet, in some indefinable way, I feel that they are kinder to me, if that be possible. But Leonard has spoken to me of his love only this morning; and though he did say, rather angrily, that I ought to be grateful for having been saved from binding myself forever to any one so heartless and selfish, yet he spoke so wisely and gently that I saw it all a little brighter after the tears which his words brought—tears which he kissed away, just as he used to kiss them when I was a little child, and he had always the strength and power to comfort me.

*August 11, 1869.* The time is very near for my going, and day by day the love and kindness which I meet with here is dear to me. I wish the parting with Rose was over, because I dread it so. Still I cannot stay, as they wish me to stay, until Captain Grey comes for them. I *could not*. Perhaps it is really only pride as Rachel says, which prevents me. I suppose it is. What pride could rise in my heart in such quick rebellion at the idea?

*Sept. 2, 1869.* My last night at Trecothick. Dark and cold, the fir-trees stand against the cold sunset sky; just above them shines the young crescent moon; and one star comes shyly out alone to peep. Quite plainly I can hear what our fishermen speak of 'the calling of the sea.' How sad it is! almost like the echo of some cry in my own heart. Rose is in bed at last. She has been softly crying here within my arms for hours. How cheerless and empty the room feels, and yet I stay here by my own wish. Mrs. Grey came herself to fetch me into the drawing-room, but I cannot go. She saw I wanted to be alone, and so she left me, only begging me to join them presently. I did want to be alone, but I did not fancy I should feel so solitary as I do. I cannot bear to go into my own room; the very sight of my packed boxes is as bad as a good-bye. I wish Mrs. Grey would just once more ask me to stay here until she leaves, as she has so often asked me before. But

course she never will again, because I've always refused so decisively and unhesitatingly. Even if she proposed it, Mr. Keverne would not let her ask me. I can well remember how coldly he said, when she spoke of it last, 'You forget that Kate would not have stayed with us through these five years if she had not bound herself.'

*Bound!* O, how I used to hate the word! I wish—I wish I had been bound for another year.

I haven't seen Mr. Keverne to-day. He went out shooting very early this morning, and had not returned when we dined. I remember that he had been shooting when he came to the farm on this night five years ago. How strange it is to think of my home life before that day—so sweet and unruffled! Will it seem as sweet and unruffled to me when I go back to it? It is too late now for me to hope for Mrs. Grey to come in and ask me to stay—far too late. I wish I couldn't see the bracken bending and swaying on the heath, and I wish the world didn't look so chill and lonely off there where the upland meets the gray evening sky. The solitude here is unbearable. I must go down, even if I cannot stay. It will be a minute's change, a minute's rest from these dismal thoughts. I have not courage to go to Rose again; it would only bring another parting. \* \*

I opened the drawing-room door very softly. The room was brilliantly lighted, and my eyes—so tired to-night—were dazzled by the sudden glare. I knew that my face looked so small and white and pinched, that it might well startle any one who saw me coming in silently so; and Mrs. Grey, who had looked up from her book with a bright smile of greeting, suddenly rose.

'Dear,' she said—and for the first time she put her kind arms round me, and kissed my lips—'I have been waiting for you. I would not have the tea brought in until you came. I will ring now; but I wish you would go and ask Mervyn to come—will you? I think he must be in the library, though I have not heard him ring for lights. I fancy he is tired, or he would have joined me after dinner.'

'Please let—' I began; but she did not seem to hear me.

'Would you mind fetching him? I shall be so glad, Kate, because I want to give my order. I intend to have a pleasant substantial tea—a cheerful one too, as we none of us cared for dinner. If Mervyn is not in the library, he may be out smoking.' So she talked on, cheerfully and kindly, till I went.

No one answered my quiet tap upon the library-door, so I passed in. The room was almost dark, but I could see Mr. Keverne standing at one of the low windows; standing quite still, and looking out among the dusky shadows of the September twilight—looking as I had often lately seen him look. The carpet was so thick, and the wind rising so noisily, that I was close beside him before he heard



me. Then, in his surprise, a sudden shiver ran through him, and the hand he laid on mine shook like the leaves outside.

'Kate, why did you come in so—like part of a broken dream

I could not help it; I laid my other hand on his. Mine was much the smaller, much the weaker, yet it stilled at once the trembling fingers it touched.

'What are you come to tell me, Kate?'

'Mrs. Grey is waiting tea for you and me. She sent me fetch you.'

'She sent you to fetch me—that is why you came?'

'Yes; that is why I came. I think Mrs. Grey kindly wished us to have a pleasant tea together, because it is my last night.'

'Hush. This last night, to which you have for years been looking forward, is very bitter to me. Go back into the light and cheerfulness, my child; I will come presently.'

I did not stand higher than his shoulder, and I looked white and thin, as if I had had a long illness; yet with my own eyes dry I could see tears gather in his, and my voice was steady while his faltered.

'Presently will do, Mr. Keverne; I will wait for you. I took my hands quietly away, and looked out from my own corner of the window. How wide and still and sad the park looked! The firs, against the faint western light, bent their heads before the strong sea wind. I pictured how the waves would be tossing and sobbing among the rocks at Kynance. The same waves which Paul and I and Leonard had watched on that summer night more than five years ago. How beautiful that evening had been! Yet I knew I would rather be just where I was, looking out upon the wind-swayed trees—we two alone, half hidden even from each other; I waiting with him in the gloom, until he chose to take me into the light and warmth.

'Kate, what is there different in your voice and face to-night? Is it gladness because this hour has come at last? Gladness because to-night I have to give you back your freedom?'

'No.'

'Not gladness, dear?'

I could not answer the questioning look in his eyes, because I could not hold my tears back any longer. Childishly I covered my face; and then—I think he knew the truth.

'My love,' he whispered, raising my face after a long, long silence, 'I cannot give you back your freedom.'

And he did not. He will not even give me back the old paper with our signatures upon it, because he says it brought him his life-happiness.

In His infinite compassion God has blessed this act of mine to all of us, as Leonard said; but it never could have been so but for a heart and will that were truer and braver than my own.

## CHARLES DICKENS'S NOMENCLATURE

IN TWO PARTS :—PART II.

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DICKENS associated one particular sound with empty consequential umsinness of speech. Examples: Hubble the wheelwright; Bumble, beadle; Pumblechook, seedsman. Schoolboys talk of 'bumbly-up;' *they* did it, all three. Pumblechook is my man now. Remember his vulgar obsequiousness to affluent Pip: '*But may I?—may I?*' (with outstretched paw). In some western counties a blockad is styled a *chump*. But as Pumblechump would have had a *tle* too much 'um' in it, I expect Dickens added the *chook* as a happy contrast of sound, not insignificant. And, mark you, allowing their difference in position and education, Bumble and Pumblechook have many features in common.

Dear old Tom! how came he to be called Pinch? Appropriately: gentle, lovable, modest, he deferred to others—pinched his own opinions; liberal, trusting, kindly, he even lent his last sovereign to audacious Tigg—pinching his own pocket; never gruffed, never unduly asserted himself; made much of others, as though *they* were mountains, and *he* a *pinch*! Meek, mild, yet with a manly spirit of his own, as the brute Jonas found.

Squod of the shooting-gallery ('Mr. George's,' real name, Pinchwell); Phil Squod. Given to shouldering his way round the place: a disarranged person; incompact as Dolgelly; a conglomerate of misplaced members, but agile, seemingly contributed by a variety of donors. Such was the ex-trooper's assistant Squod; a 'squad' of a being, with only a difference in degree from Sloppy 'the poor-house' (see *Our Mutual Friend*), *who*, please observe, is *mentioned* as one of the awkward squad. Remember Phil's pedestrian manner, his general appearance, his particular shamble; and the introduction of the *o* into his name will not affect either sound or applicability.

Toodles the stoker—good! Honest, simple 'family' man, how the little 'Toodles' gather about him! Motherly talk—babies' legs 'toodles,' you know (from 'toddles,' probably). Appropriate otherwise; quite a 'softness' or excess of simplicity in the long double *o* of witness *Toots*, not to say noodle; or, modified by consonant *d*, still retaining half its vacancy or foolery—ha, foolery!—as in Moddle, the blighted Youngest Gentleman in Company.



But Toodle: embodiment of unlettered honesty, of parental affection—he couldn't have spelled the words, poor fellow!—with nothing husky but his voice, and that was Coke! A child himself, he took his name from one; that simple fellow, so happy to 'stoke you down, sir!' He mounted crape for poor young Paul, thereby offending Dombey. A well-named stoker, Toodle; child of nature; his was also, though her name was (at great Dombey's command) changed to Richards. Why do I mention this? Because the fact of change in it shows that the name Toodle had been considered by Dickens. Then Sweedlepipes, christened Paul—boys call him 'Poll'—a pretty and fitly, for he was barber and bird-fancier. Immortal Sairey lodges with him, by the bye. I hear the birds singing in his shop what time he merrily shaves precocious Mr. Bailey, their clear notes swelling with enjoyment of that ancient youngster's injunction to Poll to 'go gently over the pimples, with the grain, and keep the bits of whisker for himself!' O lathery fiction! and listening to the melody of thrush, canary, finch, and linnet, the *tweddle* of their shriller pipes associates the barber's name.

Next, Montague Tigg, or Tigg Montague ('Anglo-Bengalee'); anyway, Tigg. Spritely, adventurous, jocund, slippery dodger! A tricky fellow; easy, audacious; as introduced (and for long afterwards), in difficulties. In pawn for Mrs. Lupin's tavern bill; hard up when Martin meets him at 'my uncle's.' Living by his wits, and on credit; *vulgo*, 'on tick.' Name, combination of *tick* and *trick*; provincial word 'trigg,' to avoid, to escape from. 'Montague,' high-flown, significant of his pretensions; merely tagged on. 'When I was at the head of my regiment—!' &c. There are a few real Pickwicks and Winkles, but probably the name of Pickwick was also—as Winkle, too—conceived to be original. Anyhow, if adopted, Dickens had his purpose. Observe the trustingness of Pickwick, his innocent reception of preposterous absurdities, his amiable gullibility. He booked Munchausen yarns; was taken in by Trotter, by Jingle, by all who tried to take him in; was even slain by a stone,\* as Goliath by David. Heart too big, judgment too little; no discrimination. Impulse took sense prisoner. Ever in scrapes through want of caution, excess of feeling, undue sympathies; brimming with benevolence; a gentleman at heart; with scores of good qualities, and a shrewd taste for punch, Mr. Pickwick was little better than a fool. He believed on the spur; allowed heart to rule head; *picked quick* in all he attempted, thought, or said. Boarding-school predicament through *picking quick*; Bardell trial, ditto. Name, Samuel; probably chosen for its sweetness; but *pick-quick* certainly indicative. As to Winkle, very *apropos*. Remember his undeserved character, his reputation, as a 'sportsman.' The tallest of the four friends; the 'smallest' of them. His skating at Wardle's

\* 'Bill Stumps, his mark.'

**M**oor House, his rook-shooting at Dingley Dell—aimed at a bird and shot poor Tracy!—his ride to Muggleton, his fearful flight from fierce and fiery Dowler (as great a coward as himself), all come to mind, not omitting his pugilistic onslaught on the little lad at Bury. Where could a more appropriate name be found? Winkle? Verily, so trivial a shell-fish, you might have picked him out with a pin!

I will finish the four off-hand. Who next? Accept the name in an impromptu conundrum. When was Mr. Jingle like Speke at the Nile? Give it up? When he was going to *trace it up, man!* There! that's off my conscience!

The surname of Tracy Tupman may be understood. He was susceptible—a lady's man. Jingle's story of Don Bolaro's daughter affected him to tears. The tale of the lady who lost her head excited his sympathies. The widow at Rochester ball impressed him. The spinster aunt (Rachel Wardle) drove him disconsolate to the 'Leathern Bottle,' Cobham. Tupman languished, Tupman wept, when 'lovely woman' was his subject. He was little better than an amiable cow, bull, ram; in form even rather approximating; undeniably sleek, not to say 'soft.' His amatory lock of hair bedecked his forehead like a hirsute horn. Gentle animal, well-conditioned and meek-eyed, though, as a swain, somewhat lumbering. We all know what a 'tup' is. Now follow me in the authorial transitions as imagined: soft, sleek, tame, cow, bull, sheep, *tup!* and there you have the *man* Tracy.

Let me deal gently with Snodgrass; wasn't he a poet, though perhaps not greater in his 'line' than Mrs. Leo Hunter, whose 'Perspiring Frog' subdued him so completely? A *snob* in many respects, as 'green' as *grass*, Augustus was a goodish sort of gentleman. Change *snob* to 'snod,' and add the 'grass' to point his *greenness*—he is there!

Dickens, by the way, has another character called Noddy; and possibly *snod* suggested it. And Barham-Ingoldsby tells us of Lord Tomnoddy. From *snob* or *noddy*, anyway, may *snod* be drawn.

Casting about for the famous schoolmaster's name, Dickens probably thought of Squeeze, indicative of tyranny, cruelty, and tight-fistedness. Not enough. The proprietor of Dotheboys Hall (which *wasn't* a hall) had some grim, ghastly, vulgar fun about him: the unsightly, unlearned, unamiable scoundrel would have made ungrammatical jests while he sat on a lad's coffin and swiped his beer, or operated laughingly on a suffering pupil's abscess with a rusty penknife (as his wife *did*). Squeers is a comic and hilarious devil, a one-eyed Gorgon, a *queer* and *squeezing* brute. Eureka! Dickens put the *s* of 'squeeze' before and behind 'queer,' as he might have a horse before and behind a cart to pull it and push it out of the mud. Thus appended, we have (S)queer(s) complete, the very 'skew' *s*'s conveying his optical deformity; a sinister aspect alto-



gether. Why, the very word *askew* is part of one of his people! Remember Gride's horrid old housekeeper—crooked, blear-eyed, toothless Peg; a beldame given to uneven pursuits, as when she stole the will of Madeline's maternal grandfather. Expressive name that; her zigzag path from honesty, and her general dissent from others' opinions, set forth in *slide askew*! Bland and sweet when his interests were at stake, an anathema in breeches when he could safely indulge his mean, empty, blatant 'philanthropy'; how his rolling periods, his sweeping denunciations, his sulphurous adjectives, come to us in the name of Honeythunder! He was only bearable at odd times; the cloud of the man wrapt even the gentle Shepherdess; while his volleyed, crashy overbearingness to bright-eyed Crisparkle (who settled him as one would settle a waterspout) will, if remembered, prove the appropriateness of his name.

Talk of the curate. Early riser, bather in winter time. See how he took his 'header' in the Cloisterham river to regain Drood's watch and pin! Ever ready, ever alert, ever fresh, be it to serve God or man, truly the Reverend Septimus was *crisp* all over, embodying health, nerve, elasticity, too; with a *sparkle* in his voice, his manner, his eye, his spirits. And Crisparkle was his name.

What gives Nickleby? Not Ralph the usurer; we have the dead Godfrey and his voluble widow before him. But Godfrey lost her money and his own, poor dabbler; his 'nickel' went! And in the ringing uncontrolledness, the chronic volubility of Mrs. Nickleby, there is quite a metallic jingling. But, saying nothing that Ralph's money-lending assists the foregoing ideas of *nickel*, recollect another thing—Mrs. N.'s petulance and disposition both to take offence and to dispute. If she didn't quite *naggle*, she was given to *niggle*. Thus from *nickel* (on the male side), or from *naggle-niggle* (on her own), comes the name, the 'by' being nothing—a mere tailpiece, like the *ley* in Tapley, Snawley, or Wititterley, or itself in Jellyby. You recollect Tartar the ex-lieutenant (*Edwin Drood*; not Bob in *Reprinted Pieces*)? Lamented Dickens! but that thy gifted pen ceased at the inexorable call of Death, bidding thee rest from thy labours until the great Author shall finish this world's work and the mystery of eternity be published, thou hadst made something of that character! Before the second number of the uncompleted story appeared, I foresaw and revealed its axis—prophesied the use that Jasper would make of Durdles, and that the serpent would be scotched. The article is in existence to prove my words. Tartar was not then sketched. *He* would have been the deliverer. His quickness, his ingenuity, his daring, his disposition constitute him John Jasper's opponent—the watcher of the watcher. That wretch would have met his match in Tartar—would have 'caught a Tartar' in the naval lieutenant. My word for it, Dick Datchery is only *Tartar in disguise*, his very wig assumed, and he, the champion of poor

osa Bud, employing both the Deputy and opium-crone as instrumental spies upon Drood's uncle. I could prove the oneness of Mr. and Datchery most easily.

And Datchery? His marvellous head of hair, his *thatch*, conferred the name. Believe or not, Drood was *not dead*. The night he beheld Jasper and Durdles on the cathedral leads, that saw them in the crypt—the night when Jasper *drugged* Durdles, even as he had previously drugged the 'loving cup' he passed to Drood and Durdles, so causing their quarrel—that night beheld the crypt-keys taken, and the subsequent incarceration of the nephew and rival. He remembered Jasper's wrath when Deputy surprised him with the mason. But I must hurry on.

Boythorn (supposed, but erroneously, to represent W. S. Landor). Only his *bark* terrible; gentle at heart; loud-voiced and boisterous; malediction in expression; empalement (an you credit him) his just punishment—see how he notified his trespassers of steel guns, man-traps, when not one was planted!—a sharp-pointed *thorn* to warn him; a kindly-souled *boy* in reality. Such was Laurence; and all named Boythorn.

Dr. Blimber, Cornelia Blimber his daughter, next. Prone to work blindly, persistently at school duties; a sort of incessant peerage, within prescribed limits, about them both; almost ophthalmic in self-imposed pedagogism. I see them pursuing the scholastic routine, pacing along with most monotonous purpose; and the speckled pair, with their regular tread, suggest two mill-horses, duly wearing *blinkers*, undoubtedly Dickens's first thought, whereout Mr. Blimber came.

Then Creakle. Hear the tyrant's boots as he comes behind his oil-victim to clutch hair or inflict stripes! Hear both boots and sneezy lungs as he issues asthmatical orders, the terrible Tungay ('Show that badge conspicuous!' fame) in rear, like a wooden-legged janizary, and *he* the Rhadamanthus! Hear boots and voice of *creak-eak-eak-ing* chair (all three) as the Salem monster advances upon his prey!

The name of Jarndyce comes not from himself, but from the terminable Chancery suit. Who but he did not its jaundiced presence blur? Think of its effect on Richard Carstone, on Ada Clare, on Gridley, 'the man from Shropshire.' And with all his strength of character and counter-geniality, John Jarndyce at times turned *low* as he surveyed the trailing slimy legal Alexandrine, its constitutional *jaundice* occasionally too severe for his mental health and spirits, save when the wind was in the west.

As to Skimpole, a mere line. Unfeeling at heart, brilliant in speech, assumedly ideal as the ether above Mont Blanc, yet with an appetite for bank-notes (and no scruples, only let them be secretly received), flying over others' woes with his peculiar alpenstock of



tinselled self, you see the skimmer, pole in hand, before you as he was.

Ardent, unlimited in his ideas and passions, allowing neither conscience nor criminality—is the utter ruin of a home, yea *two* homes, no crime?—to bound his horizon; taking his general nature, and not the definite elopement and subsequent travels in France, in Italy, in Switzerland, in Spain—his self-will and pride waving back all proffered pilotage to the haven of truth and happiness, himself holding the fatal rudder—truly we find few more appropriate names than Steerforth.

Ah-ha, dear Rumty Wilfer, christened Reginald, art thou there? Stop! thou art later introduced. The exponents must be thy wife and daughters. Well, take them all—stately, arrogant Mrs., 'Bella, and Lavinia—throughout the whole story, did ever you or Rokesmith their lodger meet with a more *wilful* family? Each of the three must have her way (for 'Bella only sobered down after knowing Rokesmith-Harmon, *Our Mutual Friend*), their conceited self-opinionated wilfulness evidenced in countless domestic squabbles and determinations, as you know. And yet 'Bella was very lovable; but *that* was when she got away from her home with 'pa and her lover, in the Mincing-lane sanctorum, or down to Greenwich. But Mrs. Wilfer and Lavinia—*wilful* from first to last.

No more insignificant word, yet suggestive of tiny identity, than 'tit'—Tappetit, for example. Pert, conceited morsel of a man not grown, not *likely* to grow. See how he 'assumes the god, affects to nod, and seems to shake the spheres,' as he presides over the United Bulldogs in blind Stagg's cellar. Look at his wonderful legs (pity he got 'em wounded in the Gordon riots, and had to lose 'em and turn shoeblack!), and see the *dapper tit* of an apprentice, his swelling soul above his craft of locksmith, even as I hear him repudiate his master Varden, or see him offer his initialed handkerchief to the smiling Sir John in default of a card; a *dapper* little fool, heady as all fools are, and quite a *tit* in aspect.

But two tits! Yea—excuse me—as it were, the sound of a thousand times a thousand tits, all tittling and tittering together. Such is the sound; but the special word (and what a word it is!) gives us a marvellous idea of mental littleness yet moral affectation; a sort of tintinnabular effect, as though all the light-toned bells in the house were set a-ringing. Wititterley; there you are—exactly indicative of the lady whose disease was soul, and who might be—I have her husband's word for it—blown away by a breath. How the insipidity of the novel which my dear Kate read to her—was it the *Lady Flabella*?—must have accorded with the peculiar nature of Mrs. Wititterley! Fragile, gossamery (but for the surreptitious beef-steaks), poor, delicate moth!

As Pecksniff's upturned eyes not inaptly favoured a 'duck in

thunder,\* so sleek, fat, oily Chadband is well named. Hear him discourse to Jo, the crossing-sweeper; see him holding forth to his select *band* of followers, whose unctuous hypocrisy took its tone from him; has he not the flabbiness, the rotundity of a chub or *chad*? The fish is before you, and the man.

What about Darnay's father, Evrémonde? French noble of the ancient *régime*, last of a long and vicious line; deeming that the poor were mere chattels to be bought and sold; that ample amends were in the louis d'or he flung to the father of a murdered child; that the *world* was his oyster, and he (and his class) all in all; how curiously Dickens his nomenclator combines the *all* (Englished, *evré*, every) and French word *monde*! a very bathos, but *all the world* implied in its French-English.

What a marvellous horse was Flying Childers! Small wonder that the horse-rider, Childers, one of Sleary's circus riders, should derive from that famed animal. How the people of Coketown applauded his nightly feats! not even their 'hard times' can restrain their curiosity to see the equestrian.—In vain the remonstrances of Lizzie Hexham; he *would* love her. Poor passionate schoolmaster; strong of will, but blindly perverse in one particular; he looked at the sun of his affection, and so persistently that all became green of hue and discoloured. There is no character more *headstrong* than Headstone, the suicide and murderer, with so much good in him, so little self-restraint. Accept it as you please, powerful in mind and *strong* of head; for all that, jealous love brought out his *headstrong* disposition.

And the chemist? See the apotheosis of fancy! A figure of speech occurs to the author's mind to denote a human figure, the haunted man Redlaw. Can I follow the metaphorical thought? Then follow me; as thus: the chemist; embodiment of misanthropy; a blight on all he moved amongst; a terror by his pestiferous presence. Not even Draco greater, and *his* laws were writ in blood. For the fatal contagion of his presence, the chemist was *ed-law* itself; the proclamation of death to cheerfulness, to hope, to gentle love. Remember how he temporarily overcast the brightness of the Tetterby home, and withered every healthy thing with his misanthropy; carrying moral death into each house; a *Red-law* which was impossible to escape whilst it existed in its dread entirety!

Those Eatanswill editors! I take it that Potts was merely frightened so as to make the famous verse applicable to him,† otherwise any name would have done; but his rival, Slurk—Ah! Ever on the watch to trip up Potts in a 'leader;' ever lurking about, pen

\* The 'domestic fowl overtaken in the ravages of an electric storm.' (Dickens's own paraphrase.)

† 'Lines to a Brass Pot,' see *Pickwick Papers*.



in hand: having the key-word *lurk*, how easily could Dickens prefix an S!

Now, Nadgett. Secret, silent spy, or 'inquiry-maker,' if you will; a stealthy man, who seemed to (as it were) follow himself, so secret was he; *taking* note of this and that, and *making* notes in his mysteriously-carried pocket-book; remember the particulars of his watch on Jonas. Undeviating as Crusoe himself in keeping his island register (and, to point the comparison, how did Nadgett isolate himself?) *notch* by *notch*—the one for days, the other for clue-some facts; there you have the idea; and from *Notch-it* comes Nadgett. Test it as you like, the name holds good.

Snitchey and Craggs, the lawyers. The former ('Self,' if you recollect) not unfrequently reposed unexpected confidence in Mrs. S.; confidence which was opposed to his professional character. But wives are privileged; no marvel that he 'split' or (vulgo) 'snitched' at times. But as for Craggs, was not he 'dressed in gray, like a flint, and generally *not unlike a flint*, take him for all in all.' Now a flint suggests mineralogy; and how easy the transition from flint to rocks, from rocks to—Craggs!

Do you bear in mind Jagers the lawyer? As sharp as a *dagger*; but I think neither that word nor his aptitude to *stagger* others with his cross-questioning acumen suggested the name. He was never smooth in his capacity; from his first introduction to his exit, he is roughly acute, persistently severe. How he tamed his house-keeper, Molly the murderess, indicates his *style*. In his office, Little Britain, as at home in Gerrard-street, Soho, the criminal-lawyer is consistently and unvaryingly *jagged*.

I approach my friend Dick. Who doesn't like Dick Swiveller? So bothered by little debts, that he couldn't get across the street without circumvallating an area of miles; very much too fond of 'the cordial that sparkled for Helen'—in brief, given to 'the rosy' and innumerable 'modest quenchers'—Dick had a giant's heart, and was only perverted in trivialities by the pressure of circumstance. See how he befriended Kit Nubbles; and recollect his honesty of disposition, his generous feeling towards the Marchioness, that poor tiny maid-of-all-work, who, like Josh Bagstock's native attendant, or even Topsy herself, 'had no particular name,' though jovial Dick dubbed her Miss Sophronia Sphynx. Bored by difficulties—often of his own making, the thoughtless, careless fellow!—he had just to twist about for existence (until his annuity came) any way he could; all round the pivot of his chequered state, not unlike a swivel-gun itself. What better name, then, than Dick Swiveller?

Who is here? Tommy Traddles. He drew himself together (as we phrase it) at the last; became a judge; but trace his earlier career and *personnel*. Not even his hair would keep down and orderly. He is disarrangedly wide in everything, from the skele-

he drew and upwards. Micawber finds no difficulty in pulling out to sign IOUs. His character is as open as his legs and is. Nothing vacant about him, but little compact. He can't keep quiet when Davy is telling his tales to the listening school-boys. He *straggles* into the thread of *Roderick Random* or the *Arabian Nights*; or, better word again—provincially corrupted—he *saddles*, as an unaccustomed horseman his steed. And there Charles Dickens hit him to the life.

O, that inimitable love-scene of Bumble and Mrs. Corney! It is in our memory, unique and relishable, for all time. Not to urge, how she did *carney* him over, and how the beadle's hesitancy appeared after his private inspection of her spoons! I see the meddling, bashful matron, her hand reposing in fat Bumble's paw, her head sinking on his shoulder, as she *carries* that parochial mate; and from *carney* to Corney is but a vowel.

The next? Why, let it be Quilp's mother-in-law. Her pinched face and form are before me: the sense of that dwarfy devil's ill-effect of her stirs my indignation. Depressed, frightened, growing disgusted by it (both she and her daughter), the little woman seems to shrink into her shoes at the approach of Quilp. See him squint at her; hear his tantalising spleen. Poor Mrs. Jiniwin! Did the name spring from *minikin*? No, no; she was by no means one. Truly a fond mother and true of heart, she loved her daughter as much as she feared her son-in-law. With all her small infirmities, she was *genuine*; and I think the word is representative, though misapplied to Jiniwin as in the text.

Thackeray gave us a Newcome, and so did Dickens;\* but save the Christian name of the latter, 'Clemency,' is indicative of disposition, the name itself (as also that of her co-servant and her husband, Ben Britain†) was probably hit upon without special meaning. With her hooked nose, her memorable cap, her shrill and crowy voice; above all her sharp projecting pimpled nose—the 'pips' whereon deepen in intensity as little Paul poses with his pertinent inquiries, or his impertinent comments on the legendary Bull (tossler of bad boys)—most skewery relict of unfortunate Peruvian miner, behold Mrs. Pipchin, correctly and cutaneously named, her entire character being *prominently* positive.

As to the law-stationer Snagsby, good, easy man, kind friend to the crossing-sweeper, what a life his perverse partner led! Talk of skinning eels, snigs, *snags* as they are often termed, easily she put him in the pan alive. He dared not even aid the street-Arab with broken victuals, save in secret; his existence is a perpetual *sniggle*, like the writhing creature; and this word is in the dictionary. Timorous, henpecked *snag* was Snagsby!

\* Clemency Newcome, in the *Battle of Life*.

† Ibid.



Finally, the Eden settler. As Mrs. Joe Gargery had her wax-ended cane, 'Tickler' (as her husband and young Pip well knew), so, for corrective purposes, Hannibal Chollop carried his weapons—the real rowdy insignia—'Tickler' and 'Ripper.' 'Sir! we must be cracked up! We air the salt of the airth! that is toe be remembered! Crack us up, or look out for sarpints!' Pretentiously christened Hannibal (even as spouting Boiler was styled Boanerges), how ready the bully was to 'chaw up' Mark and Martin! Yea, from first to last, a 'chawer-up;' and Chollop named. Just silence the *U's*, as the French do in Marseilles and such words, and the very sound of the significant phrase is given. Or receive it otherwise through *gobble*. Dickens knew some dialects; he was pretty well 'up' in the Lancashire; and in it the synonym of *gobble* is *gollop*, just as *dollop* means a lot, a quantity. Change the *g* in *gollop* for *ch*, the bully's name is there in its completeness. Make choice of words; the point they lead to is the same, for 'gollop' and 'chaw up' have one common origin and signification.

Like Sirach of old, I 'make an end.'

W. F. PEACOCK.

## THE POET

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As noontide blazed in Tempe's leafy bound,  
One tuned his lyre, and swept from nimble strings  
A rapid prelude, echoes flutt'ring round  
On soft but viewless wings.

The gods came down to hearken to the strains  
Veil'd in thin airs, save grave Melpomene ;  
Like marble stood she tinged with bluest veins,  
Charm'd to an ecstasy.

' Wouldst triumph, minstrel ? ' pensive spake she ; ' waft  
To heav'n earth's finest fancies—sing me lays  
Such as may move my soul to crown thy craft  
With ample meed of praise.'

The minstrel backward flung the waving gold  
Of youth's long tresses, scann'd the azure sky ;  
Lost in its depths his spirit wax'd more bold,  
As larks that upward fly.

He sang of beauty : fair fresh morn, pale eve,  
Sun-purpled peaks, meads starr'd by snow-white kine,  
How Grecian maids their pictured peplus weave  
For great Athene's shrine.

The stream flow'd softer down its rocky bed,  
Leaves hush'd their murmur ; yet no voice was heard  
From where that awful goddess raised her head,  
No glorious feature stirr'd.

He sang of wisdom : how the gods approve  
Deep knowledge, granting to the master-mind  
Their richest blessings, wealth and power and love,  
Wide empire o'er his kind.

Still silence held the groves ; a tettix shrill'd  
Disdain upon the harp that mock'd his song ;  
Once more his envious shell the poet thrill'd,  
Majestic, silvery, strong.

He told of heroes : that Titanic strife  
Which raged 'twixt earth and heav'n—the godlike grace  
Of Helen—how they bade farewell to life  
Who look'd upon her face.



Flinging wild music from the gleaming threads,  
He smote all modes of mortal hopes and fears ;  
All climes he roam'd where poesy e'er treads  
To wake or smiles or tears.

At this the Muse's features quickly changed ;  
A glow suffused them, like the coming day ;  
Yet nobler rang his song, each scale he ranged  
With ever-varying play.

On life and love, their fitful joys and woes,  
Their dark yet certain issue—death—he dwelt ;  
And then the goddess, startled from repose,  
Largest approval dealt.

Her clear eyes gleam'd, she trembled as she laid  
A crown of laurel on the poet's brow,  
And words of wisest counsel briefly said,  
' Henceforth be this thy vow :

To sing of human cares, to glad man's life ;  
Bright cheering thoughts in wingèd words enshrine ;  
Love truth, love freedom ; song will heal all strife,  
For verse is half divine !

So shall this age, and ages yet unborn,  
Call thee true prophet, foremost of the race ;  
So shall man's strength and bloom of maiden morn  
With gladness greet thy face !

Her splendours (rosy where the sunlights gild  
Their pale curves) faded ; kindling with her lore,  
Outburst the wild-eyed poet, ' I will build  
A song for evermore !'

Long years fled by, but never brought the hour  
To hold his wish, till silence still'd his tongue :  
How many languish for the poet's power,  
How few can mould his song !

Yet deem we that a purpose nobly plann'd,  
Pursued all breathless to the golden west,  
Redounds to glory, though th' ideal scann'd  
In youth still mock life's quest.

# BELGRAVIA

JUNE 1873

## STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET,' ETC.

### Book the Third.

#### CHAPTER II.

'O, the little more, and how much it is,  
And the little less, and what worlds away!'

**T**HE four sisters had inhabited the smart little box on the Boroughbridge road about four months, when Elizabeth's scanty stock of patience came to an end. Gertrude's small despotism, Diana's languors and affectations and headaches, she could abide no longer. She was brought so much closer to these evils in that circumscribed abode. She had no hillside orchard whither to flee at any hour of the day or evening, even on cold spring nights, when the young moon was sailing through the clouds, and when Hawleigh had shut its shutters and lighted its lamps for the night, and it would have been an outrage of all the proprieties to go out for a walk; no airy turret, half bedchamber and half sitting-room, where she could read or muse in solitude; only a neat little square bedroom, divided from Gertrude's by so fragile a partition that its inmates were wont to whisper like conspirators in their vesper talk.

The Vicar's death, too, had given Gertrude a new position in the home circle. She assumed the responsibility of their future life. She had chosen and taken the house, and selected the furniture they were to keep; and regulated the mode and manner of their new life, which friends and acquaintances of the past they were chiefly to cherish, and which they were gently and graciously to let drop. Gertrude kept the purse and the keys, regulated the expenditure, and held possession of the narrow store closets. The younger sisters could hardly order an extra cup of tea without permission, or breakfast in bed perchance on a bleak winter morning without



inventing some ailment as an excuse for that indulgence. Diana submitted from sheer laziness.

'I must live with some one who will order my dinner and put out my tea for me,' she said; 'and it may as well be Gertrude as any one else. I daresay if I were rich enough to have a confidential maid, she would tyrannise over me.'

One day, towards the end of March, Elizabeth astonished her sisters by declaring her intention of going abroad straightway.

'I shall go over to Dieppe,' she said, 'and wander through Normandy, and then make my way somehow to Belgium—my geographical ideas are of the vaguest, but I shall find out everything when I am there—and then perhaps I shall go up the Rhine; and I do think I shall come back till the winter. I have been reading up foreign Bradshaw, and making tremendous calculations about what to do and means. O, by the bye, Gertrude, how much have we come to live upon? I know I can manage with it, for I mean to do this in a strong-minded economical way—travelling third-class, and walking from one town to another when the distances are short, and third-class travelling is dirt-cheap on the Continent. I shall wear no fine washing dresses, nothing more expensive than a linen gown and a waterproof cloak.'

Until this moment Gertrude had only been able to stare. Even the languid Diana dropped her novel, and looked her astonished sister at this wild proposition.

'Are you mad, Elizabeth?' exclaimed the eldest sister sternly. 'or do you mean this for a joke?'

'I am not mad, not a wee bit wud, as the Scotch say'—she read a little of Burns with her lover—'and I have long left joking. Pray don't look so unutterably shocked, Gerty. I really mean what I say. What is the use of all this talk about women's rights if one is to be pent up all one's life in a place like this in order to do homage to the proprieties? Hawleigh is killing me with inches. I shouldn't at all mind dying, but I don't want to die of slow poison; and my present life is poison to me—worse than infinitesimal doses of antimony.'

'Very flattering to the relatives you live with,' suggested Gertrude with dignity.

'O, I don't mean you; but this house, Hawleigh, everything. Old Lady Paulyn was right; we ought to have gone on the Continent. Not to settle down in some prosy old place, as she suggested, but to wander about. People do not half live who live in one place.'

'The roving existence you talk of may be very well for persons of your impatient temperament,' said Gertrude; 'but for my part, I could not live without a settled home; and I believe Diana and Blanche share my feelings on that point.'

'I'm not quite sure of that, Gerty,' said the intractable Blanche. 'Hawleigh is very well in its way, and we know plenty of people, and are sure to be asked to ever so many croquet-parties in the summer. But I should dearly love roaming about the world with Lizzie.'

'In a linsey gown and a waterproof?' cried Diana incredulously. 'What would you do with all the time you spend before your looking-glass in that case?'

'I could get on without a looking-glass if there was something worth living for,' said the damsel.

'Do not let us descend to puerilities,' observed Gertrude, with her air of practical wisdom. 'Such a mode of life as Elizabeth suggests is quite out of the question.' Imagine my sister wandering about alone, in third-class carriages, stopping at second-rate inns, exposing herself to insult from underbred foreigners.'

'That is only your insular prejudice,' said Elizabeth. 'Remember all the nice books we've read about lady travellers—"From Ostend to the Tyrol for a Five-pound Note;" "Third-class Passengers to the Jungfrau;" "Meat-teas and Glaciers; or a Maiden Aunt's Adventures in Savoy;" and so on. Those books seem all to be written by unprotected females of limited means. Why shouldn't I get on just as well as other unprotected females?'

'If you were forty years of age, the idea might be somewhat less preposterous.'

'Would it? I'm sure I feel as if I were sixty. But, however that may be, I must positively get away from Hawleigh. The air of the Boroughbridge road disagrees with me. You must give me my share of our income, Gerty—'

'Which would be about seventy-five pounds.'

'Is it really so much as that? I should feel immensely rich on the Continent with thirty shillings a week.'

'You appear to forget that this house was taken with a view to joint occupation.'

'You can keep ten pounds a year for my share of the rent and taxes.'

Gertrude argued for an hour, and even Diana took the trouble to remonstrate. But it was in vain that both ladies endeavoured to demonstrate the actual impossibility of such a life as Elizabeth proposed to lead. The girl was inflexible.

'I am of age,' she said; 'and no one has the faintest right to curtail my liberty. I have set my heart upon getting away from Hawleigh. Blanche can go with me if she likes. She and I have always got on very well together; but if she doesn't like, I shall go alone.'

'I suppose you forget that you have expectations from aunt



Chevenix,' said Gertrude, as a final argument; 'and that such a step as you contemplate is likely to alienate her affection for ever.

'I have never allowed expectations to stand in my way,' answered Elizabeth scornfully; 'and as I can live upon a pound a week, I can afford to be independent of aunt Chevenix.'

Remonstrance being useless, the two elder sisters bewailed their sister's folly in secret. It was a complete disruption of the small household. Blanche elected to follow the fortunes of Elizabeth agreeing to pay her share of the rent during her absence. The most melancholy point in the whole affair was the diminution of state which this severance would necessitate. One of the two servants—the irreproachable parlour-maid, who wore muslin aprons—would have to be dismissed, now that the cost of her maintenance could be no longer shared by the four sisters. This fact moved both Gertrude and Diana more deeply than the loss of their younger and wilder sisters.

Providence, however, had a care for their interests; and an event was looming in the future which was destined to alter Elizabeth's views, or rather to present her with a more brilliant opportunity of escape from the life that had become obnoxious to her.

She was walking alone one gusty afternoon, about a week after the first discussion of her foreign wanderings, and had rambled farther than usual on the road between Hawleigh and Ashcombe—a road that was little better than a winding lane that meandered through a long valley at the foot of the moor, following the course of a stream that brawled and babbled over its rocky bed, in the winter swollen to the dimensions of a river, and in dry summers vanished altogether from the eye of man, leaving its bare stony bed to bleach in the sun. The deep banks of the lane were thickly clothed with greenest ferns in the late summer time; but at this season there were only a few violets nestling in the mossy turf, through which the red rich soil of the West peeped here and there in rude patches.

This lane was a favourite walk of Elizabeth's. Young oaks and older Scotch firs rose like a forest on one side; the steep shoulder of the moor shut it in on the other. A solitary darksome place in the chill March dusk, gloomy with Nature's pensive gloom—a very cloister in which to meditate upon the faults and follies of a blighted life.

The boundary of her longest rambles was an old stone bridge about three miles from Hawleigh, at a point where the stream widened and made a sharp curve across the road; a very ancient bridge, covered with gray old mosses and pale sea-green lichens and supposed to have been built by those indefatigable road-makers the Romans.

Here she lingered this afternoon, resting a little, with her folded

arms upon the parapet, watching the faint pale moon driven wildly through a cloudy gray sky.

'I don't suppose I shall be any happier abroad than I am here,' she said to herself, ruminating upon her new scheme of life; 'but I shall at least have something to do, and I shall not have so much time for thought if I keep jogging on from one place to another.'

This was the result of all her meditations that afternoon. She looked forward to the change in her existence not with actual pleasure, only with a vague hope of relief.

She had been standing on the bridge about ten minutes, now following the moon till she was lost in a sea of clouds, now watching the water gurgling over the stones, when she heard the approach of a horseman in the quiet lane; some farmer, no doubt. She did not trouble herself to look round; but waited till he should pass before beginning her homeward walk.

He rode briskly enough up to the bridge, then slackened his pace, and rode slowly across; then to her surprise drew rein suddenly on the other side, sprang from his horse, and came towards her.

'Miss Luttrell, is it really you?'

She turned quickly, her pale face flushing in the twilight. It was the first time she had ever blushed at his coming.

'Lord Paulyn!' she exclaimed; as much surprised by his appearance as if she had been a thousand miles from his domains.

'I thought I could not be mistaken,' he cried, holding out both his hands, but only receiving one of hers, and that one given with a reluctant air; 'but I should never have expected to find you in this wretched lane—alone, too. I—I haven't seen you since the Vicar's death, and I ought to have written, I daresay, but I'm not a dab—I mean, I'm a poor hand at penmanship. I should have telegraphed to you to say how sorry I was, only I knew my mother would do all that kind of thing.'

'Thanks. I don't think anybody's condolence is of much use in such cases, however well meant. One loses all one has to love in the world, and one's friends write polite letters, with quotations from Scripture, which are usually incorrect.'

This with a faint attempt at carelessness, but with tears rising unbidden to her eyes.

'But you haven't lost all you love,' seizing upon the small black-gloved hand, and possessing himself of it in spite of her—'at least, not all who love you; that is to say, there is one foolish beggar I can vouch for who still loves you to distraction.'

'I am not at all aware of any such person's existence. Let go my hand, please, Lord Paulyn; you are pressing the rings into my fingers.'



'I beg your pardon,' unwillingly releasing it. 'But don't pretend not to know, Elizabeth; that is too bad. I daresay other fellows have made themselves foolish about you; but you know who I mean when I talk of loving you to distraction. You know that there never was any man so infatuated as I have been—as I still am, worse luck!'

'About Miss Ramsay, I presume;' with a chilling air.

'Come, now, Lizzie, don't be absurd. Has my mother been letting out any of her fine schemes for getting me to marry Sarah Ramsay?—a young woman of thirty, with freckles and sandy hair, and about as much figure as a broomstick. She's to have something like half a million of money, I believe, for her marriage portion; and a million or two when her father departs this life. My mother picked her up at Torquay in the autumn, and has been trying it on ever since, but without effect. I'm the kind of horse that may be brought to the water, but I don't drink unless I'm thirsty.'

'Lady Paulyn told me that you were going to be married to Miss Ramsay; that it was a settled thing.'

'Then she told you an infernal lie.'

A little thrill of pleasure stirred Elizabeth's heart at this unfilial observation. It was not that she liked Lord Paulyn, or that she was proud of his constancy, or grateful for his affection, or that she had at that moment any idea of marrying him. She was merely pleased to discover that she had not been superseded; that she still retained her dominion over him, still held him in her thrall; that she could go home to her sisters, and tell them how egregiously they had been duped by the dowager's diplomatic falsehoods.

'No, Lizzie, I never cared for any one but you,' the young man went on, after he had muttered his indignation at the dowager's attempt to deceive; 'and I suppose I shall go on caring for you to the end of my days. It's the most miserable infatuation. Do you know that I am tolerably safe to win the Derby this year, with a horse I bred myself; his sire was one of the old Dutchman stock, and his dam was sister to Styriax, who won the Two Thousand six years ago, and the Chester Cup the year after? Yes, Lizzie, I think the Derby's a safe thing this year; and yet I set no more value upon it than if it was nothing. Think of that, Lizzie—the blue ribbon of the turf. I've been winning no end of things lately; yacht races and so on last year, and a cup at Newmarket the other day. It's the old adage, you know: unlucky in love—But I'd rather win you for my wife than half-a-dozen consecutive Derbies. Come now, Liz, it's all off with that other fellow; he's off the course, the Lord knows where. What is there to stand between us?'

'Merely the fact that Mr. Forde is the only man I ever loved, and that I am not quite sure I don't love him still. I owe you at least candour. It is a very humiliating confession to make; but

I do not mind telling you that I loved him very dearly, and that my heart was almost broken by his desertion.'

'Confounded snob!' said the Viscount; 'but I'm very glad he did make himself scarce. It would have been a most unsuitable match; a splendid girl like you, born to adorn a coronet and all that kind of thing. But I say, Lizzie—'

'Who gave you leave to call me by my Christian name?' she asked, looking round at him indignantly. She had been staring at the little river hurrying over its rugged bed, hardly seeming to listen to Lord Paulyn's discourse. He had his horse's bridle upon his arm, and found some hindrance to eloquence in the restlessness of that animal.

'O, come now. It's not much of a privilege to ask, after standing all I've stood for you, and being laughed at by my friends into the bargain. But I say, Elizabeth, I want to talk to you seriously. I only ran down from London by last night's limited mail; and the chief motive that brought me here was the thought that I might find you a little better disposed towards me, when the edge of your feelings about that parson fellow had worn off. You've had time to grow wiser since we met last, and to find out that there's something more in the world than sentimental parsons. By Jove, I should think Hawleigh was a favourable place for reflection; a regular *Servey's-Meditations-among-the-Tombs* kind of a place. You've had time to think it all over, Lizzie; and I hope you've made up your mind that you might be happier knocking about the world with me than moping alone here. Be my wife, Lizzie. I've been instant to you all this time, though you always treated me badly. You can't be so hard-hearted as to refuse me now?'

She was slow to answer him, still watching the swift-flowing river, as if she were seeking some augury in the gurgle of the waters. Even when she did speak, it was with her eyes still bent on the stream.

'I know that I am supremely miserable here,' she said, 'and that is all I know about myself.'

'But you might be happier in the world, Lizzie, with me. Who could be anything but miserable moping in such a hole as this?' demanded Lord Paulyn, with a contemptuous glance at the darkening moorland, as if it had been the meanest thing in nature.

She scarcely heeded the manner of his speech or the words that imposed it. She was debating a solemn question; holding counsel with herself. Should she astonish all her friends—prove that she, the rejected of Malcolm Forde, could mount to dazzling worlds beyond their ken? The days of her humiliation had been very bitter to her; she had eaten ashes for bread, and moistened them with angry tears. The fact that she cared nothing for this man, at her chief feeling about him was a sentiment verging upon con-



tempt, hardly entered into her thoughts to-night; they were too exclusively selfish. Self was the very centre of her little world. Her own humiliation, her own disappointments, made up the sum-total of her universe. Whatever was womanly, or true, or noble in her nature had begun and ended with her love for Malcolm Forde.

An hour ago and she had believed Lord Paulyn as completely lost to her as her father's curate, and she had begun to regret the folly that had cost her all the splendours of that brighter world which had seemed so very fair to her two years ago. And, behold! here was the constant lover again at her side, again offering her his rank and wealth, not from the haughty altitude of a King Cophetua to his beggar-maid, but urging his plea like a condemned felon beseeching the reversal of his doom.

Busy thoughts of what her life might be in the years to come if she accepted him—busy thoughts of the dull blank it needs must be if she rejected him—crowded her brain. Selfishness, ambition, pride—all the worst vices of her nature—won the victory. She turned to her lover at last, with a face that was very pale in the dim light, and said slowly,

‘If you really wish it, if you are content to take me without any profession of love or sentiment on my side—I made an end of those when I quarrelled with my first lover—if you can be satisfied with such an indifferent bargain—’

‘If!’ cried the young man with sudden energy, putting his disengaged arm round her reluctant figure, which recoiled involuntarily from that token of appropriation; ‘that means Yes, and you’ve made me the happiest fellow in Devonshire. The horse that can stay is the winner after all. I always said I’d have you for my wife, Lizzie, and now I shall keep my word.’

From that moment her doom was sealed. There was no looking backward. Lord Paulyn took possession of his prize with the iron hand of some lawless sea-ranger swooping upon a disabled merchantman that had drifted across his track. From that hour Elizabeth Luttrell had a master.

### CHAPTER III.

‘Lorsqu’un homme s’ennuie et qu’il sent qu’il est las  
De traîner le boulet au bague d’ici bas,  
Dès qu’il se fait sauter, qu’importe la manière?’

ELIZABETH’S manner that evening was just a little colder and quieter than usual. No unwonted flutter of her spirits betrayed the fact that the current of her life had been suddenly turned into a new channel. She had suffered her lover to accompany her to the edge

of that suburb in which the Boroughbridge road was situated, and had there dismissed him.

'I may come to see you to-morrow, mayn't I?' he pleaded. He had been trying to make her fix an early date for their marriage all the way along the dusky lane.

'We must be married and have our wedding-tour over before the Derby, you know,' he said persuasively. 'You don't care much about the touring business, do you? I'm sure I don't. I never could understand why newly-married people should be sent to stare at mountains, and do penance in musty old cathedrals, as if they'd done something wicked, and were obliged to work it out somehow before they could get absolution. A week at Malvern would be about our figure; or if we had tolerable weather, I could take you as far as Malta in the *Leprachaun*.'

'You are in a great hurry to settle matters; but when I promised to marry you, just now, I said nothing about the date of our marriage.'

'But that goes without saying. I've served my apprenticeship. You're not going to turn round upon me like Laban, and offer me one of your sisters, or make me work seven years longer. And if you have made up your mind to marry me, it can't matter to you whether it's soon or late.'

'What will Lady Paulyn say?' asked Elizabeth, with a little sigh. There was something pleasant in the idea of that wily patron's mortification.

'My mother will be rabid,' said the dutiful son; 'but so she would whomsoever I married, unless it was for bullion. It was a good joke her coming to try and choke you off with that story about Sarah Ramsay. Yes; my mother will be riled.'

'And Miss Disney? do you think she will be pleased?'

The Viscount was not so prompt in his answer this time.

'Hilda,' he said meditatively; 'well, I don't know. But I suppose she'll be rather glad. It'll give her a home, you see, by and by, when my mother goes off the hooks. She couldn't have lived with me if I'd been single.'

'Of course not. We shall have Miss Disney to live with us, when, by and by?'

'In the natural course of events, yes; my mother can't go on cursing the Ashcombe estate till the Day of Judgment, though we no doubt she'd like very much to do it. And when she's dead, and all that kind of thing,' continued his lordship pleasantly, 'Hilda can have an attic and a knife and fork with us, unless she marries in the interim, and I don't think that's likely.'

'She looks rather like a person who has had what people call a disappointment,' suggested Elizabeth, wincing a little as she remembered her own disappointment.



'She came into the world with a disappointment,' replied Lord Paulyn. 'Her mother eat the sour grapes, and her teeth were set on edge. Her father, Colonel Disney, was heir-presumptive to a great estate, when my aunt Sybilla married him; but when his uncle died, six months after the Colonel's marriage, a claimant sprang up with a rigmarole story of a Scotch marriage, and no end of documentary evidence, the upshot of which was, that after a good deal of Scotch law, and pursuing and defending and so on, the claimant—a black-muzzled lad with a dip of the tar-brush—walked over the course, and Hilda's father was left with a large fortune in the hands of the Jews, in the shape of post-obits and accommodation-bills. He ran away with a French opera-dancer soon afterwards, in a fit of disgust with society. My aunt and Hilda were left to drag on somehow upon a pittance which my grandfather, a stingy old beggar, had settled upon his daughter when she married. When my aunt died, Hilda came to live with my mother, and has had a very pleasant time of it ever since, I make no doubt.'

They parted at the beginning of the villas that were dotted along the first half mile or so of the Boroughbridge road, giving a trim suburban aspect to this side of Hawleigh. There were even gas-lamps, macadam, and a general aspect of inhabitedness very different from the narrow lanes and rugged common on the other side of the town. This new neighbourhood was the west-end of Hawleigh.

'I shall come to see you to-morrow,' repeated Lord Paulyn, reluctant to depart. 'And mind, everything must be over and done with before May. Do you remember the first Derby we were at together, nearly two years ago? Jolly, wasn't it? I've got a new team for the drag, spankers. I've set my heart upon your seeing Young Englander win. Hadn't you better write to Mrs. Chevenix? She's the woman to do our business. If you trust everything to your sisters, they'll be a twelvemonth muddling about it.'

'We have plenty of time for discussing these arrangements, without standing in the high-road to do so,' said Elizabeth impatiently. 'If I had known you were going to worry me, I should never have said what I did just now. After all, it was only said on the impulse of the moment. I may change my mind to-morrow morning.'

'O no, you won't. I won't stand anything of that kind. I am not like that parson fellow. Once having got you, I mean to keep you. I think I deserve some reward for holding on as I've done. You mustn't talk any more about throwing me over; that's past and done with.'

'Then you mustn't worry me,' said Elizabeth, with a faint sigh of utter weariness. 'So now good-night for the last time. It is past seven o'clock, and my sisters will think I am lost. I almost wonder they haven't sent the bellman after me.'

And thus they parted, without the kiss of betrothal, which Miss

Jutrell would not consent to receive in the high-road. But he had kissed her once in the lane; passionate lips pressed against swilling lips, typical of that union which was to be no union; my self-interest and selfish short-lived passion going hand in hand.

'O, dear,' thought Elizabeth, as she went in at the little garden gate, and knocked with the doll's-house knocker on the doll's-house door; 'what a tiresome thing it is to be engaged!'

She had thought very differently two years ago, when her willing head rested for the first time on Malcolm Forde's breast, and a supreme contentment, which seemed more of heaven than of earth, descended on her soul—a perfect restfulness, like the serene stillness of a rescued vessel that lies at anchor in some sheltered harbour after long battling with wind and waves.

'How he begins to worry me already,' she thought of her new master. 'I foresee that he will make me do whatever he likes, unless he goes too far and rouses the spirit of opposition in me. But Gertrude and Diana will not be able to crow over me any longer, that is one comfort. And I have done with small rooms and a small income, that is another.'

Her sisters had drunk tea, and dismissed the urn and tea-pot, and a cold and somewhat sloppy cup of their favourite beverage had been set aside for her on a little tray. She smiled involuntarily, as she threw off her hat, and sat down in a corner to sip the cold tea, thinking how, in a very short time, pompous serving-men would hasten to administer to her wants, and her coming in and going out would be an affair of importance to a vast household. She sat in her corner looking listlessly at her sisters, grouped round the lamp, and engaged in their usual avocations, and could not help feeling that it was really very good of her to endure these small surroundings, even for the moment.

'Where have you been all this time, Lizzie?' exclaimed Blanche, looking up from the construction of some futility in bead-work. 'At the Melvins', I suppose, kettle-drumming?'

'No; I went for a longer walk than usual, and forgot how late it was.'

'And have been roaming about alone after dark,' said Gertrude, with a horrified look. 'Really, Elizabeth, if you must indulge your eccentric taste for solitary rambles, you might at least respect the opinion of the world so far as to gratify your strange taste within reasonable hours.'

'I have no respect for the opinion of the world. I have outraged it once, and perhaps may outrage it again.'

'Which way did you go?' asked the pacific Blanche, anxious to change the subject.

'Towards Ashcombe.'



'I wonder when Lord Paulyn is to be married,' said Diana, contemplating some grand effect in a square inch of point-lace.

'Rather soon, I believe.'

'Where did you hear that? Come now, you must have been calling somewhere, or you would not have heard the news.'

'I have not been calling anywhere, but I have reason to believe Lord Paulyn is going to be married, and rather soon.'

'There's nothing new in that,' said Diana; 'the dowager told us as much.'

'Would you like to be bridesmaids on the occasion, all of you?' asked Elizabeth.

'What, bridesmaids to that horrid Miss Ramsay!' cried Blanche.

'No, not to Miss Ramsay—but to me.'

The youngest and most energetic of the Luttrells sprang from her seat, very nearly overturning the moderator-lamp in her excitement.

'To you! O, you darling, have you been cheating us all this time, and are you really going to be a great lady, and present us all at court, and give no end of balls and parties? It's too good to be true.'

'And as we had no ground for such an idea yesterday, when you were full of your continental wanderings, I really can't understand why we are to believe in such a thing to-night,' observed Gertrude the pragmatical, with a spiteful look.

'Can't you? There are some people in whose lives great changes seem to happen by accident. The accident of a wicked anonymous letter helped to break off my engagement with Mr. Forde,' with a keen glance at her eldest sister. 'A chance meeting with Lord Paulyn this evening on the Roman bridge has altered my plans for going to Normandy. He made me an offer again to-night, for the third time in his life, and—'

'And you accepted him,' said Diana. 'You must have been nearer idiotcy than I should like to think a Luttrell could be, if you rejected him.'

'But there is such a thing as constancy even to an idea,' said Gertrude. 'I should have thought Elizabeth would have cared more for the memory of Malcolm Forde than for worldly advantages.'

'No,' answered Elizabeth defiantly, 'I am not so slavish as to go on breaking my heart about a man for ever. And living screwed up in this box of a house has taught me the value of surroundings.'

'You will go to live at Ashcombe, I suppose,' suggested Gertrude, 'with the dowager and Miss Disney? I can fancy how nice that will be for you.'

'I shall do nothing of the kind. I mean to live in the world, in the very centre of the great whirlpool—to go spinning round perpetually in the fashionable maelstrom.'

'A hazardous life for the welfare of an immortal soul,' said Gertrude.

'I have ceased to care for my soul since Malcolm gave me up. Indeed, I have a suspicion that my soul ceased to exist when he took away, leaving only some kind of mechanism in its place.'

## CHAPTER IV.

*Hoyden.* This very morning my lord told me I should have two hundred a year to buy pins. Now, nurse, if he gives me two hundred a year to buy pins, what do you think he'll give me to buy fine petticoats?

*Nurse.* O, my dearest, he deceives thee foully, and he's no better than a rogue for his pains. These Londoners have got a gibberish with 'em would confound a foreigner. That which they call pin-money is to buy their wives everything in the world, down to their very shoe-ties.'

UNBOUNDED was the rapture of Mrs. Chevenix when she received the unlooked-for tidings of Elizabeth's engagement. She wrote at once, urging that the wedding should take place in London. 'It will be just the height of the season,' she said, 'and everybody in London. Gertrude, Di, and Blanche can come up with you. I will select a point, and find rooms for all of you. You could not possibly be married from that footy little house in the Boroughbridge Road. And there will be your trousseau, you know, dear, a most important question; for of course everything must be in the highest style, and I really doubt whether Cerise, whose real name by the way I have lately discovered to be Jones, is quite up to the mark for this occasion. She suits me very well, but I have lately discovered a want of originality in her style; so I think the better way would be to order your superior dinner and evening dresses from Paris, and give Cerise only the secondary ones. Believe me, my dear child, I shall not shrink from expense, but we will not fall into the foolish trick of ordering more dresses than you could wear in six months, ignoring the almost hourly changes of fashion. As Lord Lyn's wife, you will, of course, have unlimited means. By the way, as you have really no responsible male relative, the arrangement of settlements will devolve upon me. My lawyers, Messrs. Gingle and Scrupress, are well up in that kind of work, and will, I am sure, protect your interests as carefully as if you were the daughter of their oldest and most important client.'

This subject, thus mooted for the first time in Mrs. Chevenix's ear, was destined to cause a good deal of argument and unpleasantness between the aunt and niece.

'I will have no settlement,' said Elizabeth resolutely. 'I take nothing to him, except sixty or seventy pounds a year, and he shall not be asked to settle ever so many hundreds upon me. I will not even sell myself. Of course, he will give me fine dresses and all I want to make a brilliant figure in his own world. He has been content enough and devoted enough for me to trust my interests to him. It stands to reason that I shall always have as much money



as I can spend. He is overflowing with riches, and as his wife I shall have a right to my share of them. But I will not allow any one to ask him to name the price that he is willing to give for me. It shall not be quite a matter of buying and selling.'

'Very high-flown notions, and worthy of the most self-willed unreasonable young woman that ever lived,' exclaimed Mrs. Chevenix in a rage. 'But I suppose you would hardly wish your children to starve. You will not object to *their* interests being provided for by people who know a little more about life than you do, self-opinionated as you may be.'

'My children!' said Elizabeth, turning very pale. Could there be children, the very sanctification and justification of marriage, for her and for Reginald Paulyn, who in marriage sought only the gratification of their own selfish and sordid desires? 'My children! I can hardly fancy that I shall ever hear a voice call me mother. I seem so unfit to have little children loving me and trusting in me, in their blind childish way,' she added dreamily, and then, with a more practical air: 'do what you please to protect their interests, auntie, in case Lord Paulyn should gamble away all his wealth on the racecourse; but remember, for me myself not a penny.'

Nor was this an idle protest. She took care to give the family solicitors the same injunctions; and as Lord Paulyn was not a man to insist on extreme generosity in the preliminary arrangements of his marriage, he did not dispute her will. So certain estates were settled upon such younger sons as Elizabeth might hereafter bring to her husband, and certain smaller properties were charged with the maintenance of daughters; but the wife herself was left subject to the husband's liberality. Mrs. Chevenix shook her head ominously.

'Was there ever anything so foolish?' After what we have seen of that old woman too!' she added, with somewhat disrespectful mention of her niece's future mother-in-law.

Their knowledge of the dowager was certainly not calculated to inspire any exalted hope of the son's generosity. Yet, in that foolish period which went before his marriage, Reginald Paulyn showed himself lavish in the gifts which he showered upon his mistress. Did she but frown, he propitiated her with an emerald bracelet; was she angry with him without reason, she had her reward in a triplet of rings, red, white, and green, like the Italian flag. The Paulyn diamonds, which had lain *perdu* since the dowager's last appearance at court, were dug out of the bank, and sent to be reset at a famous West-end jeweller's. Elizabeth beheld their far-darting rays with dazzled eyes, and a mind that was almost bewildered by this fulfilment of all her childish dreams. It was like the story of Cinderella; nor does one know by any means that Cinderella cared very much about the Prince. The old fairy tale is hardly a love story, but rather a romance of horses and carriages.

other worldly splendour, and swift transition from a kitchen to lace.

'After all, it was perhaps very lucky that Mr. Forde jilted me,' Elizabeth thought in her worldly-minded moments, when she was n to look at the carriages which Lord Paulyn had chosen for

The graceful shell-shaped barouche, the dainty brougham, innumerable patent inventions for the comfort of its occupant. There had been no Paulyn town-house since the reign of George , when Reginald's grandfather had inhabited a gaunt and dismal sion out Manchester-square way, the freehold of which had a settled upon a younger son, and had, in due course, been forced to a money-lender. The dowager, in her day, had preferred og in furnished lodgings during her residences in the capital. Elizabeth had the delight of choosing an abode at the West-end, finally, after exploring all the more fashionable quarters, selected orner house in Park-lane, all balconies and verandahs, with a ain pleasing rusticity.

'You must build me a huge conservatory on the top of that eous pile of stabling and kitchens at the back,' she said to her r, to whom she issued her orders somewhat unceremoniously at a period of their lives; 'and I must have a fernery or two somewhere.'

The selection of furniture for this balconied abode was an agree- s amusement for Miss Luttrell's mornings during the few weeks spent in Eaton-place, and was not without its effect upon the nce Lord Paulyn kept at his bank, which was an unusually small for so wealthy a customer. The young lady showed a marvel- s appreciation of the beautiful in art, and an aristocratic contempt all questions of cost. She had her pet forms and colours, her rices upon every subject, the gratification whereof was apt to be ensive.

'She's like Lady Teazle, by Jove,' grumbled the Viscount, ming his heart to a friend in the smoking-room of his favourite b, after a long morning at Kaliko's, the crack upholsterer; ends a fellow's money like water; and, by Jove, I feel some- es inclined to growl, like the old buffer in the play.'

'Shaw to be so,' said his friend, 'if a feller marries a poor n's daughter. They always make the money fly like old boots; en't been used to it, and like to see it spin; just like a child that as a sovereign on a table.'

'If she were always to go on like this, she'd be the ruin of me,' rmured Reginald ruefully; 'but of course it's only a spirt; and he were inclined to do it by and by, I shouldn't let her.'

'Of course not. You'll be able to put on a stiffish curb when e she's in harness.'

This capacity for extravagance exhibited by his future wife gave



Lord Paulyn subject for some serious thought. Even that of a settlement which, at the first glance, seemed so generous impulse upon the part of Elizabeth, now assumed an alarming aspect. Might she not have refused any stated pin-money simply because she intended to put no limit upon her expenditure? It meant to range at will over the whole extent of his pastures, and be relegated to an allotted acreage, however liberal. She meant, in fact, to do her best to ruin him.

'But that's a matter which will easily adjust itself after we are married,' he said to himself, shaking off the sense of wildness which for the moment had possessed him. 'I won't have my income made ducks and drakes of even to please the handsomest woman in Europe. A town-house once bought and furnished is bought and furnished for our lifetime, and for our children and grandchildren after us; so a little extravagance in that line can't do much harm. And as to milliners, and all that kind of thing, I shall let her have as soon as possible that if her bills go beyond a certain figure, and I will quarrel; and so, with a little judicious management, I daresay I shall soon establish matters on a comfortable footing.'

So for these few weeks, her last of liberty, Lord Paulyn suffered his betrothed to have her own way—to have her fling, as he called it himself. Whatever her eye desired, as she roved at large through Kaliko's treasure-chambers, was instantly booked against her lord. The rarest Sèvres; the most exquisitely-carved ebony cabinets inlaid with plaques of choice old Wedgewood; easy-chairs and sofas in which the designer's imagination had run riot; fairy-like tables; inimitable what-nots; bedroom furniture in the ecclesiastical Gothic style, unpolished oak, with antique brazen clamps and bolts—furniture that might have been made for Mary Stuart, only it was much handsomer than anything ever provided for that high lady's accommodation, as witness the rickety old oaken bedstead from Holyrood, and King James's baby-basket; carpets from Elizabeth's own designs, where all the fairy ferns and wild-flowers that flourish in Devonian woods bestrewed a ground of russet velvet pile.

Of such mere sensuous pleasure, the rapture of choosing things for her own possession, Elizabeth had enough in the days before her marriage. She was almost grateful to the man whose purse provided these delights. Perhaps if she could have quite banished Malcolm Forde out of her thoughts, exiled his image from her mind for ever and ever, she might have been actually grateful, and happy, in the realisation of her pet day-dream.

She had asked after her friends of the Rancho when she came to London, but found that hospitable mansion had disappeared like Aladdin's palace when the Emperor of China looked out of his window and beheld only empty space where his parvenu son-in-law's residence had stood. The Cinquars had been ruined somehow.

one—at any rate not any one in Mrs. Chevenix's circle—seemed to understand how. Mr. Cinqmars had been bankrupt, his name in the papers as journalist, stockbroker, theatrical manager, wine merchant—goodness knows what; and the Rancho estate had been sold by auction, the house pulled down, the umbrageous groves on the landward side ravaged by the axe, the ground cut up into shabby little roads of semi-detached villas leading to nowhere. The lawn and terrace by the river had been preserved, and were still in the market at a fabulous price.

'And what became of Mr. and Mrs. Cinqmars?' asked Elizabeth, sorry for people who had been kind to her, and surprised to find every one more interested in the fate of the domain than in its late tenants.

Mrs. Chevenix shrugged her shoulders.

'Goodness knows. I have heard that they went to America; that they are living in a cheap quarter of Paris, Mr. Cinqmars speculating on the Bourse; that they are in Italy, Mrs. Cinqmars studying for the operatic stage. There are ever so many different stories afloat about them, but I have never troubled myself to consider which of the reports is most likely to be correct. You know they really never were friends of my own choosing. It was Lord Paulyn's whim that we should know them.'

'But they were very kind and hospitable, auntie.'

'Ye-es. They had their own views, no doubt, however. Their interest was not in Elizabeth Luttrell, but in the future Lady Paulyn. The best thing you can do, Lizzie, is to forget that you ever knew them.'

This was not a very difficult achievement for Elizabeth, whose thoughts rarely roamed beyond the focus of self, except in one solitary instance.

Upon the details of Elizabeth Luttrell's wedding it is needless to dwell. She was not married before the Derby day, anxious as Lord Paulyn had been to anticipate that great British festival, but early in the flowery month of June, when the roses were just beginning to blow in the poor old vicarage garden—as Elizabeth thought with a sudden pang when she saw the exotics that decked her wedding breakfast. The marriage was, as other marriages, duly recorded in fashionable newspapers; and Mrs. Chevenix took care that etiquette should not be outraged by the neglect of the minutest detail, by so much as a quarter of an inch on the wrong side in the depth of the bride's Honiton flounces, or a hackneyed dish among the entrées at the breakfast.

So these two were made one, and went off together in the conventional carriage-and-four from Eaton-place to Paddington Station, en route for the Malvern Hills, where they were to moon away a



fortnight as best they might, and then come back to town in time for Ascot races.

Now — these chapters being purely retrospective — comes the autumn of the fifth year after Mr. Forde's farewell to Hawleigh.

#### CHAPTER V.

'I strive to number o'er what days  
Remembrance can discover,  
Which all that life or earth displays  
Would lure me to live over.  
There rose no day, there roll'd no hour  
Of pleasure unembitter'd;  
And not a trapping deck'd my power  
That gall'd not while it glitter'd.'

THEY were at Slogh-na-Dyack, in Argyleshire, where, at the foot of a heather-clothed mountain that ran up almost perpendicularly to meet the skies, Lord Paulyn had bought for himself a palatial abode, in that Norman-Gothic style which pervades the mansions of the North—a massive pile of building flanked by sugar-loaf towers, with one tall turret dominating the rest, as a look-out for the lord of the castle when it was his fancy to sweep the waters with his falcon gaze. It is almost impossible to imagine a more delicious habitation, sheltered front and rear by those lofty hills, the blue waters of the Kyles of Bute lapping against its garden terrace; a climate equal to Torquay; long ranges of orchard houses where peaches and nectarines ripened as under Italian skies; orangeries, vineries, pineries; stabling of unlimited capacity, but chiefly devoted to such sturdy ponies as could best tread those rugged mountain roads; verily, all that the soul of a Solomon himself, in the plenitude of his power and riches, could desire; in the golden autumn, when the grain was still ripening for the late northern harvest, making patches of vivid yellow here and there upon the gentler slopes at the base of the opposite hills, when the purple heather, like a Roman emperor's mantle, was spread over the mountain.

The Norman castle was none of Lord Paulyn's building. Not in those mediæval fancies of keep and donjon, not in those architectural caprices of machicolated battlements and elaborately-carved mullions, did the heir of all the Paulyns squander that wealth which the dowager had accumulated by unheard-of scrapings and pinchings and self-denials during his long minority. The château of Slogh-na-Dyack had been erected at the cost of a millionaire Glasgow manufacturer, who had made his money out of knife-powder and scouring-paper, and who, when he had built for himself this lordly dwelling-house, had the mortification of discovering that neither his wife nor children would consent to abide there. The heather-clad mountain, the blue water, the wide bosom of Loch Fyne stretching away in the distance, the wild denizens of that mountain region,

the flutter of whose strong wings gladdened the heart of the sportsman, might be all very well; and to three or four weeks at Rothe-y or Colintrave in the bathing season the lady and her daughters had no objection; but a fixed residence, six months out of the velve, on that lonely shore, they steadfastly refused to endure. So the scouring-paper and knife-powder manufacturer, to whom the cost of a Norman castle more or less was a mere bagatelle, gave his agent orders to dispose of the château at the earliest opportunity, and resigned himself to the sacrifice involved in such a sale. The house and its appurtenances had cost him five-and-twenty thousand, the land five. He sold the whole to Lord Paulyn—after prolonged haggling, in which at last the Glasgow manufacturer showed himself unequal to the English nobleman—for seventeen thousand, and went home, after signing the contract, to his mansion by the West Park, rejoiced to be rid of his useless toy.

Lord Paulyn had been chiefly attracted to the place by its peculiar capacities for the abode of a yachting man. Slogh-na-Dyack stood on the edge of a bay, where there was anchorage for half-a-dozen yachts of the largest calibre; while on one side of the mansion there was a narrow inlet to a secondary harbour, a bay within a bay, a little basin hollowed out of the hills, where, when tempests were raging, the frailest bark might ride secure, so perfect was the shelter, so lofty the natural screen that fenced it from the winds. It was a harbour for fairies, a calm lakelet in which, on moonlight nights, one would have scarcely been surprised to find Titania and her company sporting with the silvern spray.

Hitherto Reginald Paulyn brought his wife after they had been married about two years and a half. It was her first visit, except for a fleeting glimpse of those mountain slopes from her husband's yacht, to Scotland—his land, her first lover's native land. The thought thrilled her even now, when the remembrance of the days in which he had loved her was like the memory of a dream.

She had been married two years and a half; years in which she had drained the cup of worldly pleasure, and of womanly sorrow, to the very lees. She had run riot in fashionable extravagances; given some of the most popular parties in London, in the house with the many balconies; won for herself the brilliant distinction that attends social success; queened it over all compeers by the insolence of her beauty, the dash and sparkle of her manner. For a little while—so long as the glamour lasted, and selfishness was beguiled by the intoxication of novelty—she had ruled her husband; then had come disputes, in which she had been for the chief part triumphant; then later disputes, in which his dogged strength would have conquered; then coldness, severance, estrangement, tugging at the chain, eager to go his or her own way. But before the world—that world for which Elizabeth had chosen to live—



Lord and Lady Paulyn appeared still a very happy young couple, a delightful example of that most delightful fact in natural history—a love match.

Their quarrels at the worst, and they had been exceedingly bitter, had hardly been about the most serious things upon which men and women could disagree. Money matters, my lady's extravagance, had been the chief disturbing influence. The breast of neither husband nor wife had been troubled with the pangs of jealousy. Elizabeth's conduct as a matron was irreproachable. In the very vortex of fashionable frivolity no transient breath of suspicion had ever tarnished the brightness of her name. The Viscount, in his unquestioned liberty, had ample room and verge enough for any sin against his marriage vow were he inclined to be a sinner, but as yet Elizabeth had never stooped to suspect. Their estrangement therefore had not its root in those soul-consuming jealousies which sunder some unions. Their disputes were of a more sordid nature, the wranglings of two worldly-minded beings bent on their own selfish pleasures.

Eighteen months after her marriage there came the one real affliction of Elizabeth's womanhood. A son had been born to her, fair as the first offspring of youth and beauty, a noble soul—or so it seemed to her—looking out of those clear childish eyes, a child who had the inspired seraphic look of the holy Babe in a picture by Raffaele, and whose budding nature gave promise of a glorious manhood. He was only a few months old—a few months which made up the one pure and perfect episode in Elizabeth's life—when he was taken away from her, not lost without bitterest struggles, vainest fondest hopes, deepest despair. For a little while after his death the mother's life also hung in the balance, reason tottered, darkness and horror shut out the light. Dragged through this tangle of mind and body, no one seeming to know very clearly which was out of joint, by physic which seemed to hinder or nature which finally healed, the bereaved mother went back to the world, and tried to strangle grief in the endless coil of pleasure; worked harder than a horse at a mill, and smiled sometimes with a heart that ached to agony; had brief flashes of excitement that seemed like happiness; defied memory; tried to extinguish regret for the tender being she had loved in a more exclusive devotion to self; grew day by day harder and more worldly; lost even the power to compassionate the distress of others, saying to herself in a rebellious spirit, 'Is there any sorrow like unto my sorrow?'

To Lord Paulyn the loss of his first-born had been a blow, but not an exceeding heavy one. He had considered the baby a fine little fellow, had caressed him, and tossed him in the air occasionally, at somewhat remote intervals, after the approved fashion of fathers, while smirking nurses marvelled at his lordship's condescension;





H. French, del.

ELIZABETH'S FIRSTBORN.

J. R. Battershall, sc





but he was not broken down by the loss of him. He was a young man, and was not in a desperate hurry for an heir. He had something of that feeling which monarchs have been said to entertain upon the subject of their eldest sons, an inclination to regard the heir-apparent as a *memento mori*.

'By Jove, you know it isn't the liveliest thing to look forward to,' he had said to his friends when arguing upon the subject in the abstract; 'a young fellow who'll go and dip himself up to the hilt with a pack of money-lenders, and borrow on post-obits, and play old gooseberry with his father's estate, by the time he's twenty-one, and perhaps make a finish by marrying a ballet-girl before he's twenty-two.'

It was after a season of surpassing brilliancy, an unbroken round of gaieties, involving the expenditure of so much money that Lord Paulyn groaned and gnashed his teeth when the butler brought him the midsummer bills—a season which had ended in the most serious quarrel Elizabeth and her husband had ever had—that the Viscount brought his wife to this Norman château, not in love but in anger, intending this banishment to the coast of Argyle as a means of bringing the lady to a due sense of her iniquities and a meek submission to his will.

'She'll find it rather difficult to get rid of money *there*,' he said to himself with a sardonic grin, 'and I shall take care to fill the house with visitors of my own choosing. There'll be Hilda, too, to look after *my* interest. Yes, I think I shall have the upper hand at Slogh-na-Dyack.'

This was another change which the last year had brought to pass. Just at the end of the London season—happening so opportunely after the last ball at Buckingham Palace, as Madame Passementerie, the French milliner, ventured to remark to Lady Paulyn's maid, Gimp—the noble house of Paulyn had been thrown into mourning by the demise of the dowager.

'The noble lady had led a life of extreme seclusion throughout a prolonged widowhood,' said the obituary notice in a fashionable journal; 'thus offering the most touching tribute which affection can pay to those it has cherished while on earth, and still fondly mourns when transferred to a higher sphere. Honoured and beloved alike by equals and dependents, she was the centre and source of all good to those who came within her peaceful circle, and she was followed to her last resting-place in the family vault in old Ashcombe church by a train of friends, tenants, and retainers, in which long procession of mourners there was not one who did not lament the loss of a valued friend or an honoured benefactress.' The notice had been written for another patrician widow, but served very well for Lady Paulyn, about whom the editors of newspapers knew little or nothing. She had lived a retired life in the depths of the country, and it



was argued that she must of necessity have been benevolent and beloved.

Her death, at the age of seventy-four, had been occasioned by an accident. Sitting up one night in her dressing-room after the household had retired, poring over her agent's last accounts, she had set fire to her cap, an elaborate construction of blonde and ribbons, and had been a good deal burnt about the head and face before Hilda, who slept in an adjacent room, and was promptly awakened by her screams, could rush to her rescue.

Her constitution, vigorous to the last, held out for a little while against grim death, but the shock proved too much for the aged frame, whose sap and muscle had been wasted by the asceticism of economy. The dowager died a few hours after telegrams and express trains had brought her son to her bed-side.

As she had only consented to be just barely civil to Elizabeth in their unfrequent intercourse, it was not to be supposed that her departure from this world could be a profound affliction to the reigning Viscountess. She was sorry that her mother-in-law's death should have been a painful one, and perhaps that was all.

'What a pity old people can't die like that person in Mrs. Thrales' *Three Warnings!*' she said afterwards. 'Death ought to come quietly to fetch them, without any unnecessary suffering; only a natural surprise and annoyance at being taken away against one's will, like a child that is fetched home from a nursery ball.'

The Viscount contemplated his bereavement chiefly from a business-like point of view.

'I'm afraid the Devonshire estates will go to pot now my poor mother's gone,' he said dolefully. 'I shall never get any one to screw the tenants as she did. That agent fellow, Lawson, was only a cipher. It was the old woman who really did the work, and kept them up to collar. I shall feel the difference now she's gone, poor old soul!'

'I suppose Miss Disney will go into lodgings at Torquay or somewhere, and live upon her private means,' said Elizabeth, hardly looking up from the pages of a new novel she was skimming, seated luxuriously in one of the Park-lane balconies, in a very bower of summer blossoms, kept in perennial bloom by the minions of the nurseryman.

This sounded as if she had forgotten a certain conversation in a Devonshire lane one dusky March evening.

'I thought I told you that Hilda had no means,' answered the Viscount rather gloomily. 'She must come to live with us, of course.'

'What, in our house, where we live! Won't that be rather like that strange person who lives over somewhere beyond the Rocky Mountains, and has ever so many wives? I'm sure, if Miss Disney is to live with us, I shall feel myself a number two.'

'I wish you wouldn't talk such confounded nonsense, Elizabeth. I suppose you pick up that sort of thing from your friends, who all seem to talk the same jargon, turning up their noses at everybody in creation.'

'No, but seriously, can't Miss Disney go on living at Ashcombe? I should think *she* ought to be able to screw the tenants; she must have learnt your poor mother's ways.'

'Miss Disney will have a home in my house, wherever it is. And I think you ought to be uncommonly glad to get hold of a sensible young woman for a companion. As to my keeping up a separate establishment at Ashcombe for one person's accommodation, that's too preposterous an idea to be entertained for a moment. I shall try to let the place as it stands. You'll be thankful enough for her society, I daresay, at Slogh-na-Dyack.'

'I shall have the hills and the sea,' said Elizabeth; 'they will be better company for me than Miss Disney.'

She had seen the château in the course of a yachting expedition in the autumn of last year, when the Viscount, sorely alarmed by the nature of the illness that had followed the loss of her boy, had taken her to roam the blue waters in quest of health and spirits. Health and spirits had come, in some measure—health that was fitful, spirits that were apt to be forced and spurious, a laugh that had a false ring in it, mirth which sounded sweet enough at one time, but jangled, out of tune, and harsh at another.

So the Viscount wrote to inform Hilda Disney that henceforth her life was to be spent in his household—wrote as briefly and unceremoniously as he might have written to a housemaid—and a week later Miss Disney came to Park-lane, covered with crape, pale, placid, impenetrable. Elizabeth made a great effort over herself in order to receive this new-comer with some faint show of kindness.

'I hope you two mean to get on well together,' said the Viscount, in a little speech that sounded like a command.

'I have no doubt we shall get on remarkably well—if we don't interfere with each other,' answered Elizabeth. 'I believe that is the secret of a harmonious household.'

This was an intimation designed to give Miss Disney a correct idea of her position, a hint which that young lady fully comprehended.

She accepted this position with a certain quiet grace which might have won the heart of any one who had a heart to be won. Elizabeth's had been given away twice over, once to Malcolm Forde, once to her lost baby. Her small stock of love had been spent on these two. There was no room in her cold weary heart for anything but the ashes of that old fire—certainly no admission for Hilda Disney. But as at this stage of affairs that young person appeared content to be a cipher in her new home, Elizabeth's languid indif-



ference was not kindled into active dislike. She tolerated the intruder, but at the same time avoided her. This was the position of affairs when Lord Paulyn and a few chosen friends began life and grouse-shooting on the moors around Slogh-na-Dyack.

To Elizabeth's jaded spirits, worn out by the small excitements of society, the change was at first a welcome one. It was pleasant to find herself mistress of a new domain, which differed widely from her other dominions. Very pleasant to be remote from the region of racehorses and trainers, and trial gallops and experimental exercise of rival two-year olds, in the dewy dawn of autumnal mornings; trials in which, out of mere politeness, she had been obliged sometimes to affect an interest. The novelty of the Norman castle and its surroundings delighted her; nor was she discouraged by its seclusion, or particularly afflicted by the usurpation of the limited number of spare bedrooms by her husband's sporting cronies, whereby she was deprived of the society of half-a-dozen or so of her own dearest friends, whose reception she had planned as one of the amusements of her Scottish home. The architect whose mediæval mind had designed Slogh-na-Dyack had refused to fritter away his space upon spare bedrooms, reserving his resources for sugar-loaf turrets, donjons, keeps, Gothic balconies, perforated battlements, picture-galleries, a banqueting-hall with a groined roof and a musicians' gallery, a tennis-court, and a cloistered walk under the drawing-room floor.

'You will have to build me a new wing next year, Reginald,' Lady Paulyn observed, after expressing her general approval of the château. 'It is all very well for us to exist in this benighted manner—for I don't count your shooting people as visitors—for once in a way, but we couldn't possibly exist here another year without a dozen or so more rooms.'

'Couldn't we?' said the Viscount, putting on his sullen air, which meant war to the knife. 'I chose Slogh-na-Dyack just because it was a little out of the beaten track—not much though, for people go to Oban nowadays just as they used to go to Brighton—and because it has precious little accommodation for your cackling brood of dear friends, no stowage for French waiting-maids and such rubbish—a place where I could feel myself master, and where I might expect you would even take the trouble to devote a little time to my society.'

Elizabeth yawned.

'To hear you talk about shooting innocent birds, and of what your horses are going to do next year, and what they ought to have done, but did not do, this year. What a pity there should be such a sameness in domestic conversation!'

'I suppose you would like it better if I could talk about converting the heathen,' snarled the Viscount. It was not the first time

he had tried to sting his wife with an allusion to the lover who jilted her.

'I should like it better if you had a mind wide enough to be interested in human beings, instead of in dogs and horses,' she answered, flashing out at him passionately.

Miss Disney was a mute witness of this little scene, but a mere cipher, whose presence had no restraining influence.

'I shall not think of coming here next year, unless there are some more rooms built,' Elizabeth remarked decisively, after a little more skirmishing.

'We needn't talk about coming next year until we have quite made up our minds to go away. This place has a famous winter climate,' said the Viscount, looking into a huge sealskin case, as if in search of some rare species of cigar, the selection whereof was a work of time. He had a knack of looking down when he said disagreeable things.

'I could not endure the place for more than two months,' replied his wife, 'and I have made engagements for December.'

'That's a pity; for I have invited some fellows here for Christmas.'

'I am sure you are at liberty to entertain them—with Miss Disney's assistance. I shall resign all my privileges as *châtelaine* at the end of November.'

'We'll see about that,' said Lord Paulyn darkly. But as he had often uttered this mystic threat, and nothing had ever come of it, except that Elizabeth had always had her own way in spite of him, the lady was not appalled by his dark speech.

It is not to be supposed that Lady Paulyn was always uncivil to her husband, that she flouted him in season and out of season. She had her intervals of sunshine and sweetness; smiled upon him as she did upon society, and with almost as empty a smile; bewitched him even with something of the old witchery; for, despite his numerous aggravations, he still admired her, and still fondly believed her the handsomest woman in Europe.

This was the state of affairs when Hilda Disney first entered their household; but their domestic life underwent a gradual change after her coming. It was as if by some subtle influence she widened the gulf between them, without design, without malice, but only by her presence. If she had been a statue, she could scarcely have seemed more innocent of evil intention, more unconscious of the harm she did; yet she parted them irrevocably.

She offended the wife by no demonstrative affection for the husband; yet, by an unobtrusive concern for his comfort, a perpetual solicitude, an unsleeping care of his well-being, shown in the veriest trifles, but shown almost hourly, she made his wife's indifference a thousand times more obvious than it had ever been before. By her



interest in his conversation, by her appreciation of his vapid jokes, her acute perception of the smallest matters in which his prosperity or success was involved, she reminded him of his wife's utter apathy about all these things. One of the grievances of his married life was the fact that he had never been able to interest Elizabeth in the details of his racing stud, those narrow chances and hairbreadth failures which make or mar the fortunes of the year. She liked Epsom and Ascot and Newmarket and Goodwood and Doncaster and York well enough as scenes of gaiety and excitement—festivals in which her beauty made her a kind of queen. She could even admire a winning horse as a grand and famous creature; but she had not a mathematical brain, and could not by any means comprehend that intricate process of calculation by which great results are sometimes arrived at in the racing world, and by which the Napoleons of the turf accumulate their colossal fortunes.

In this she was the very reverse of Hilda, whose arithmetical powers had been trained to extreme acuteness in the service of the late dowager, and who, without any natural fondness for horses, could enter into all the complications of a betting-book; could even, on some rare occasion, give a wrinkle to the Viscount himself, as that gentleman remarked with supreme astonishment.

'Upon my word, you know, Hilda, you're the downiest bird—I beg your pardon, the cleverest woman I ever met with. If my wife had only your brains—'

'With her own beauty! That would be too much. Not that my brains are anything to boast of, but I have been trained in a rather severe school.'

'I should think you have indeed; my mother was an out-and-outer. I don't believe there ever was such a screw, you know, before her time, or ever will be after it. There ought to be something of the kind put up in Ashcombe church, by Jove. It would look well in Latin—that quotation of Burke's, for instance: *Magnum recitigal est parsimonia*. But you've got a wider way of looking at things than my mother. And as for looks, if you're not as handsome as Elizabeth, who really is the finest woman in Europe, you've no reason to complain of your share of good looks; and you know there was a day when I used to say a good deal more than that.'

A faint colour came into Hilda's fair face.

'We were children then,' she said.

'O, hang it; I was at Oxford, and in the University eight. There wasn't much of the child about me, Hilda.'

'Except in a childish want of judgment—not knowing your own mind, in short,' she answered, looking steadily down at a flimsy printed catalogue of racehorses which they had been studying together when this conversation began.

'O, well, we settled all that ever so long ago. Let bygones be bygones, Hilda.'

'Was it I who recalled the past?'

'I'm sure it wasn't I,' answered Lord Paulyn hastily, 'and I don't want to recall it. I don't forget what a temper you had in those days, Hilda. Children indeed! You were a child who knew how to call a fellow over the coals like anything. I've a very keen recollection of some of our shindies. However, all that was so long ago, and I'm an old married man now; so I thought we should be able to get on very well together. And I must say you're wonderfully improved; ten years' more grinding in my mother's mill has made a difference, hasn't it?'

'I hope I have conquered my evil tempers, and everything else that was foolish in me,' said Hilda meekly.

That little demure speech of Miss Disney's set the Viscount thinking. Ten years ago there had been certain love-passages between himself and his cousin—a pretty little pastoral flirtation, which filled the intervals of his field sports pleasantly enough—but which, begun for the amusement of long dull autumnal afternoons in a dreary old house, ended somewhat seriously. The girl had been serious from the beginning. Her cousin, Reginald, was the only man whose society had ever brightened the dismalities of her joyless home. He was young, good-looking, energetic, and possessed that superfluity of physical strength which gives a kind of dash and swagger to a man's manner of doing things—a dash and swagger that, in the eyes of inexperienced girlhood, pass for courage and chivalry. He rode well, shot superbly, talked the last Oxonian slang, the novelty of which language was agreeable after the dowager's dull grumblings and perpetual prosing upon small worries. In a word, he was the only thing Hilda Disney had to love, and she loved him, hiding more intensity than he could have suspected under her laudic demeanour.

For a short time—a long vacation and a Christmas visit—he reciprocated her passion. The fair still face seemed to him the perfection of patrician beauty—a wonderful relief after certain sirens of the barmaid order with whose lighter converse he was wont to soften the asperities of classic learning. He had vague thoughts of a future in which Hilda should be his wife; and was severely rated by his widowed parent upon the folly of his course. Marry Hilda, indeed, without a sixpence, or a rag to her back that was not supplied by charity! He had better pick up a beggar girl in the street at once, and then his next-of-kin would, at least, have the satisfaction of taking out a statute of lunacy on his behalf.

But the passion passed—as passions were apt to pass with the Viscount. A barmaid flirtation—more in earnest than previous barmaid flirtations—blotted out the milder charms of his cousin.



When he came to Ashcombe in the next long vacation, he thought her looking pale and faded. Nor was her temper improved. She perceived his indifference, and taxed him with it. Then came bitter little speeches, sudden bursts of tears, angry rushes from the room, bangings of doors, and all the varieties of squabbling that compose lovers' quarrels; until at last, with a praiseworthy candour, the Viscount confessed that he had for some time past ceased to care for his cousin, except in the most cousinly way.

'If ever you're in want of a friend, you know, Hilda, you can come to me; and wherever I live—by and by, when my mother goes off the hooks—my house will be your home, if you haven't one of your own.'

She acknowledged this offer with some dignity, but with a very white face and lips that quivered faintly in spite of her firmness, and expressed the hope that she might never intrude upon his hospitality.

'Well, I hope you'll make a good match, Hilda,' he said, rather awkwardly, 'and then, of course, you'll be independent of me and mine; but I shall never forget you, and how fond I was of you, and all that. O, by the way, you may as well give me back the letters I wrote you from Oxford. One never knows when that sort of rubbish may fall into dangerous hands, and make no end of mischief. Hunt 'em all up, will you, Hilda? and we'll amuse ourselves with a bonfire this wet morning.'

Hilda informed him, after a few moments' hesitation, that she had made the bonfire already.

'I burnt them one by one as they came, after I had read them once or twice,' she said. 'It was safer on account of my aunt. The surest way of preventing them from falling into dangerous hands.'

'What a deep card you are!—as deep as Garrick, upon my word. You're quite sure you burnt them?'

'Quite sure. Don't be alarmed, Reginald. There will be no action for breach of promise.'

'O, it isn't that, you know. No girl with a hap'orth of self-respect would go in for that sort of thing; much less such a girl as you. Only old letters are the deuce and all for creating trouble in a man's life. I'm glad you burnt 'em.'

Never since these juvenile love-passages, which left a somewhat unpleasant flavour in Lord Paulyn's mouth—a flavour of remorse, perhaps—had he liked Hilda so well as he liked her now, in their quiet life at Slogh-na-Dyack. She was of so much use to him—able a counsellor, so ready a confidante. He gave her a pile of house-steward's bills to look over, and she charmed him at once suggesting that he should, in future, pay ready money for all household supplies—or make weekly payments, to be ranked as ready money—and claim a discount of ten per cent on all such accounts.

'No doubt the tradesmen pay your people five per cent ahead

said. 'They would willingly pay you ten for the sake of getting money. Your discounts ought to pay the wages of half your household, instead of going into the servants' pockets.'

By such brilliant flashes of genius did Hilda charm her cousin. He roared aloud as he compared this skilled economist with his wife, whose extravagances still rankled in his mind, and whose refusal of a settled allowance he had not ceased to consider an artful piece of business, whereby she had reserved to herself the right of unlimited expenditure.

If ever I let her leave Slogh-na-Dyack, I shall restrict her to an allowance of five hundred a year,' he said to himself. But there were times when the spirit of anger against his wife burned so hotly within him, that he had serious thoughts of making her spend the rest of her life in Argyleshire, with only such change of scene as his yacht might afford her—a cruise in the Mediterranean now and then, or a run to Madeira or St. Michael's.

It'll suit me well enough for six months of the year. I can't run up from Glasgow when there are any races on,' reflected Lord Paulyn, who, after the manner of racing men, thought nothing of spending his night in railway carriages, speeding at express rate to see the face of the country.

Elizabeth perceived the harmony that reigned between her husband and his cousin; perceived that he no longer troubled himself with the futile endeavour to impart his perplexities to her non-mathematical brain. She saw all this, and without being absolutely jealous—was jealousy possible where love was absent?—was keenly affected by this preference. She had been accustomed to think of her husband as her slave—a refractory slave sometimes—but never able to get off his bondage; a creature to be made glad by her smile; to be subdued into submission by her frown. She had felt the sense of power over him all the more keenly because in the society of other women he was, for the most part, morose or indifferent—occupied up in his own thoughts about his own amusements or relations—slow to comply with the exigences of polite life; a man who, if he had not been the rich Lord Paulyn, might have been counted a boor. To her own chosen friends he had been habitually civil—beauty, except her own, seemed to have no charm for him; and vivacity only bored him. All the graces of feminine costume were a dead letter.

'I think she wore cherry colour, with blue sleeves,' he answered when his wife questioned him upon a fashionable toilet; 'or did it Lord Zetland's colours, white and red? Upon my soul I don't know which.'

He beheld him now for the first time interested in the society of another woman, and beheld with wonder that woman's capacity for understanding him and sympathising with him. Mortified by



this discovery, she avenged herself at first by reducing the Viscount's sporting friends to a state of abject slavery; but speedily wearying of this shallow amusement, grew sullen, shut herself up in her own rooms—the best in the house, occupying the whole front of the second story, and sweeping the waters of the strait and the purple hills on the opposite side—read, sketched, and brooded; or roamed alone upon the mountain side, and thought of her dead-and-gone youth, and the lover she had loved and lost. His image haunted her in this lonely region—in this tranquil, empty life—more than it had ever haunted her since she knelt down upon her bridal eve and prayed to God for strength to forget him. She was in his native country for the first time in her life, and that she should think of him seemed only a natural association of ideas. Nor was this all: she felt herself injured by her husband's evident liking for his cousin's society, and so opened the doors of her heart to fatal memories; lived again, as in a dream, her brief summertime of joy and sorrow; gave up her thoughts to sad musings upon that foolish past. Sometimes she varied the burden of that sorrow by thinking of her dead baby—alas! how often in her dreams had she felt those little arms clasped about her neck, those sweet soft breathings on her cheek, and red lips like opening flowers pressed warm against her own! She thought of what that romantic home might have been to her, still blessed with her boy; fancied the sunny noontide on the grassy slope above the blue water, or the terrace sheltered from northern winds by a grove of pinasters; or in the flower-garden behind the house, a fertile hollow at the foot of the mountain; or wandering on the mountain top with her darling in her arms, the summer air noisy with loud humming of bees, and the sweet west wind blowing round them. Not for her these tender pleasures, only loneliness and regret; the bitter memory of things that had once been sweet.

Pride stifled all expression of anger at her husband's defection. Not by word or look did she betray her displeasure at the position which Hilda Disney was fast assuming in the household. On the contrary, she suffered the reins to slip from her hands as if weary of the burden of government. Her old languor and dislike to exertion, except in pursuit of some novel pleasure, returned to her. Life at Slogh-na-Dyack was very much like life at Hawleigh Vicarage; there was only a difference of detail. Trained serving-men in place of a parlour-maid; a certain state and splendour in all the machinery of the household. The evenings in the long drawing-room, with its mediæval oak furniture, modern French tapestries, and Brummagem armoury, all made on purpose for the château at the cost of the Glasgow knife-powder maker, were just as dull as the evenings in the old days, when she had yawned over a novel in the society of her three sisters. Lord Pauly and his guests con-

gregated in the smoking-room, or paced the wide stone hall, a spacious vaulted chamber always odorous with tobacco, or strolled on the terrace, staring at the moonlit water, and talking of their day's work among the birds. They were men who walked thirty miles or so between breakfast and dinner, and who, after devoting a couple of hours to their evening gorge, retired within themselves like boa-constrictors, and were in no manner dependent upon feminine society. So when Elizabeth, weary of their vapid compliments, and despising the petty triumph afforded by the subjugation of such small deer, ceased to be particularly civil to them, they deserted the drawing-room almost entirely, and solaced themselves with smoke and billiards, or placid slumbers, stretched at ease upon morocco-covered divans, lulled by the ripple of the wavelets that lapped against the beach.

Once in ten days or so Lord Paulyn sped southward for a day's racing, generally accompanied by a chosen friend, and returned, depressed or elated as the case might be, to talk over all his proceedings—his triumphs or his failures—with his cousin Hilda. These confabulations, which took place openly enough in some snug corner of the drawing-room, wounded Elizabeth to the quick. She began to think that all those vapid men saw the slight thus put upon her, and discussed it, in their smoking-room conclaves. She began to fancy that her very servants were losing some touch of their old reverence; that her maid had a compassionate air.

'Shall I live to be pitied?' she asked herself, remembering that she had sold herself to the bondage of a loveless marriage for the sake of being envied.

One day she determined upon sending for Blanche, in order to bring some new force to bear upon Miss Disney; but upon the next day altered her mind. She would not endure that her sister—even her best-loved, most-trusted sister—should see that there was an influence in her husband's house stronger than her own.

'Blanche would go on so,' she said to herself, 'and I feel too weak and tired to bear fuss of any kind. And after all what does it matter if my husband has found somebody to be interested in his racing talk? It never interested me; only I believe that Hilda's sympathy is all put on. No woman could be interested in handi-capping and Chester Cups for ever and ever.'

So Lady Paulyn made no struggle to maintain her authority. She allowed Hilda to drive her pony-carriage, and make friends with the few families scattered in pretty white villas here and there upon the coast. She left to Hilda the trouble of dispensing tea and coffee at the eight-o'clock breakfast; the gentlemen were early at Hough-na-Dyack, and over the hills and far away before ten. She suffered Hilda to receive the sportsmen when they came straggling from the boat, with the dogs at their heels, and she rarely appeared herself in the public rooms of the château till a quarter of



an hour before the eight-o'clock dinner. She had the long days to herself, and roamed alone where she would, making her companion of the hills and the blue sea. Sometimes, when she looked from the hill-tops towards the Mull of Cantyre, her soul yearned to escape by that rock-bound point, to sail away to the South-Sea isles, and toil, for God's sake, by the side of the man she loved. O, how easy how sweet, how smooth it seemed to her now, that better life which she had cast away! 'How easy it would have been for me to do good for his sake,' she said; 'to be schooled by him, to become any thing that he could make me—a saint almost—by his pure influence.'

Then from that distant seaward opening, from that dream-like gaze towards an unknown world far away, her tired eyes would sink downward to the towers and pinnacles of Slogh-na-Dyack, like a fairy palace dimly seen through the misty atmosphere. Was it not verily the fairy palace of her dreams, symbol of the Cinderella's triumph she had fancied for herself in her childish visions?

'I wonder whether Cinderella was happy,' she said to herself 'or if she ever wished herself back among the cinders, and hated her fairy godmother for having made her a princess. She found her rich husbands for her sisters at any rate, and that is more than I have done. I have been *no* use in the world to any one but myself.'

On quiet Sundays, and the Sabbath at Slogh-na-Dyack was very quiet, the sound of the bells ringing through the soft summer air brought back the thought of Hawleigh and the grave old church, with its massive clustered columns and lofty arches, shadowy aisles sonorous with the fresh young voices of the choir, and sometimes with *his* voice alone, reading the lessons of the day, with a tender earnestness that gave familiar words a new meaning. Here in this little Episcopalian chapel the sacred rites were sorely stinted; white-robed choristers trooping in through the vestry door, decorated altar-cloths or floral festivals, but the same dull round from year's end to year's end; a harmonium grumbling an accompaniment of common chords to the dullest selection of hymns extant, and one elderly incumbent prosing his feeble little sermons, and doing his best to maintain the dignity of his Church single-handed.

Elizabeth and Miss Disney were regular in their attendance at this small temple, which was an unpretentious edifice of corrugated iron, like a gigantic Dutch oven, until at last, after about half-dozen Sundays, Lady Paulyn wearied of the elderly incumbent.

'There's another Episcopalian chapel at Dunallen,' she said 'a real stone pretty little Gothic building, which can hardly be intolerably hot as this oven. I shall take the pony-carriage this afternoon, and go over there.'

She did not invite Miss Disney to join her in this expedition; that young lady, who made a point of holding herself aloof from all intercourse to which she was not specially invited, and who had ce

tainly received no inducement to abandon this reserve, went her own ways to the little iron church in the island, while Lady Paulyn drove to Dunallen. It was a calm sunless afternoon, with an atmosphere that seems made on purpose for Sundays—a day on which the birds forget to sing, and the rabbits lie asleep in their holes. The Kyles of Bute looked smooth as an Italian lake, but there was no Italian sky above them, only the uniform gray of Scottish heavens, unbroken save by the white mist-wreaths on the hill-tops.

The Viscount and his friends, after having spent all the lawful days of the week in perambulating the moors, lunching on the mountain-top upon savoury stews cooked in a travelling kitchener, washed down with Glenlivet, were not sorry for the day of rest, which they devoted to lying full-length on the divans in the smoking-room, or sauntering in the garden and hot-houses, talking Newmarket and Tattersall's. Going to church was not among their accomplishments.

Dunallen was a hamlet among the hills, round which sundry white-stone villas had scattered themselves, a hamlet on a winding hill-side road looking downward across an undulating tract of fertile meadow and cornfield to the blue bosom of the Loch. Lady Paulyn had marked the spot, and the little Gothic Episcopalian church, lately erected at the cost of a land-owner in the neighbourhood, in the course of her lonely rambles. The village was within three miles of Slogh-na-Dyack, and one of her favourite walks was in the moorland above it.

The bells were ringing with a sweet solemn sound in the still air, as the little carriage drove round the curve of the hill, and up to the pretty Gothic doorway of Dunallen chapel. The Presbyterian church stood a few paces off, a gaunt edifice of fifty years ago, grim and uncompromising; as who should say, Here you will get only plain substantial fare, and no foreign kickshaws; something to bite at, in the way of theology. Behind the Episcopalian chapel, with its dainty, dandified air, there rose a little grove of firs upon the green slope of the hill, crowning the Gothic pinnacles with their dark verdure, and in front of the fir-grove, a few yards from the chapel, stood a tiny manse, a miniature Tudor villa, in which a young newly-wedded incumbent might have found life very picturesque and pleasant, but in which there would have hardly been breathing room for a pastor with a large family.

Lady Paulyn was one of the first to enter the small church, and was speedily conducted to a comfortable seat by an obsequious pew-opener, who had marked the arrival of the carriage. The light within was softened by painted windows from Munich; the open seats were of dark oak; the small temple had the look of a labour of love.

The service was conducted in the usual unornamental style; a little stout man with sandy whiskers read prayers at a hand gallop



to a sparse congregation, who afterwards joined their vinegar voices in a shrill hymn, not one of those Hymns Ancient and Modern which Elizabeth loved so well, but a dryasdust composition, which would never have given wings to any heavenward-soaring soul. Elizabeth thought these ministrations but a small improvement on the services of the corrugated iron chapel at Slogh-na-Dyack. She had fallen into a drowsy absent-minded condition by the time the shrill singing was finished, and did not take the trouble to look up to see the little stout man trot up the pulpit-stairs.

She sat looking down at the loosely-clasped hands in her lap, when another voice, without any preliminary prayer, gave out the text; and lifting her eyes with a wild stare, in which rapture and surprise were strangely blended, saw a tall figure in a surplice in the place where the little man might have stood, the figure of Malcolm Forde.

No cry broke from her lips, though her heart beat as it had never beaten before. She sat dumbly looking at him, white as death, with fixed dilated eyes. The dead newly risen from the grave could not have moved her more deeply. Great Heaven, how she loved him! It seemed to her as if in that moment only she realised the overwhelming force of her love. A new world, a new life, were contained in his presence. To see him there, only to see and hear him—whatsoever gulf yawned between them—was new life to her: renovated youth, hope, joy, enthusiasm, aspiration for higher things.

'O God, if I can only hear his voice every Sunday,' she thought, 'I will worship him, and live for him, and be good and pure for his sake, and never strive to lessen the distance that divides us. What more joy can I desire than to know that he lives, and is well and happy, and breathes the same air I breathe, and looks out across the same sea, and is near me unawares. O, thank God for the chance that brought me to Slogh-na-Dyack! Thank God for my bonnie Scottish home!'

His sermon to-day was like his old sermons, full of life and fire and quiet force and supreme tenderness, the sermon of a man speaking to a cherished flock out of a heart overflowing with love. Yet she fancied that his tones had lost something in mere physical power; that deep-toned voice was weaker than of old. Once he stopped, exhausted, at the close of a sentence, with an appearance of fatigue that she had never seen in him at Hawleigh, and his face looked very pale in the cold light from a northern window.

The thought of this change touched her heart with a sudden sense of fear. That spiritual countenance turned to the northern light, those deep hollow eyes, all the lines of the face more sharply chiselled than of old, something that was not age, but rather indication of hard wear and tear that stood in the place of age—

were the tokens of his late labours, the seal that his mission set upon him.

'If he should die,' she said to herself, appalled; 'while I, who am made of some hard common clay, too tough to be broken by sorrow, go on living.'

The sermon was not a long one. There was no hymn afterwards, only the clink-clink of shillings and sixpences into the bowl, and a grim-looking Scotchman carried round the little church.

The service altogether had been of the briefest; and Donald the minister, who perhaps took his measure from a familiarity with the Presbyterian office, had not arrived with the pony-carriage when Lady Paulyn came out of the church.

She looked round her with something like terror at finding herself standing almost alone by the church-door, knowing that Malcolm Forde was so near; might come through that open door at any moment, and meet her face to face, for the first time since he had cast from his heart with cruel deliberate repudiation.

She thought of the morning on which she had gone to his lodging in quest of him; gone with a determination to humble herself, ask for his forgiveness and his blessing before he left her for ever. Behold, that bitter parting, that loss of something which had meant to her the very life of her life, had not been for ever. The world which seemed so wide was narrow enough to bring these two faces again.

'If I had seen him that morning, and he had forgiven me, I could never have married Lord Paulyn,' she said to herself. 'If he had left me only a few words of kindness or forgiveness, I would have been true to his memory all my life; but his coldness drove me mad. I had no memory of the past to console me; I had no hope in the future to sustain me.'

Still no sign of Donald and the ponies. The scanty congregation dispersed; the mountain road was empty. She stood watching the curve round which the ponies must in due time appear, half expecting, half hoping that Malcolm Forde might come that way.

She had been waiting about ten minutes or a quarter of an hour—a period which seemed almost interminable—when she heard the shutting of a distant door, and the sound of footsteps approaching her. She had gone a little way along the road, in the opposite direction to the vicarage. The incumbent and his friend would be likely to return thither when the service was ended. She had not thought of herself purposely in the path of her old lover.

She heard the footsteps drawing nearer, and the voices of two men conversing. One, the thin reedy pipe of the incumbent; the other, that deeper graver organ, whose every tone she knew so well.

They had gone a little way past her, when the short stout gentleman, who had been apprised by the appearance of a stray sovereign



in the alms-basin that some important member of his flock, or perhaps chance some illustrious stranger, had been among the congregation. He turned himself about to behold her, pirouetting in an airy manner, as if admiring the beauties of the landscape.

'Lady Paulyn, I declare,' he murmured to his companion, after that brief survey.

His companion stared at him for a moment with a look of sheer amazement, and stopped short.

'What Lady Paulyn? Do you mean an old woman, Lady Paulyn's mother?'

'No, a young woman, and a very handsome one. The Dowager Lady Paulyn died a few months ago.'

They were walking on again. Malcolm Forde had not looked backward. Was it verily Elizabeth, the woman he had loved, the woman whose image had followed him in his farthest wandering? The shadowy face looking into his, the spirit voice speaking within him, in spite of his prayer for forgetfulness, in spite of his manhood and his reason? In dreams, walking and sleeping, she had been within him. Thoughts of her had intruded themselves upon his most solemn meditations; never, even at his best, had he been free from those olden fetters, the fatal bondage of earthly love.

And yet he had passed her unawares, upon that mountain road and would not for all the world go back to speak to her. A few yards farther on they met the pony-carriage, the small cream-colored ponies with bells upon their harness, the little shell-shaped carriage with its bearskin and scarlet rug.

Mr. Forde smiled his bitterest smile at the sight of that dainty equipage. Was it not for pomps and vanities such as these she had sold herself?

'How does she happen to be here?' he asked his companion.

'You know her!' exclaimed Mr. Mackenzie, the incumbent turning upon him sharply.

'Yes, I know her.'

'But won't you speak to her? Let us go back. It must seem so rude to have passed her like that. And you can introduce me. I should really have liked to call on her when she first came. Slogh-na-Dyack, but she would naturally attend the Episcopal church down there, I thought, and I hate the idea of seeming intrusive. Let us go back and speak to her before she drives off.'

'No, Mackenzie. My acquaintance with her began and ended a long time ago. I will not renew it. You must get some one else to present you, or call upon her and present yourself.'

'Was she Lady Paulyn when you knew her?'

'No.'

'Quite a nobody, I've been told, before her marriage?' inquired he.

'I don't know your exact definition of a nobody. Her father was my vicar—a man of old family; and she was one of the loveliest girls, or I will say the loveliest, I ever saw.'

'No doubt—no doubt; she's a splendid woman now. But it was a great match for a country clergyman's daughter. I wish my daughters may marry half as well when they grow up. Their complexions at present have a tendency to run to freckles; but I dare say they'll grow out of that.'

The pony-carriage flashed rapidly by at this moment; Elizabeth driving, and looking neither right nor left.

'How do they come to be here?' asked Malcolm.

'What, didn't I tell you yesterday, when I took you for that long round? No, by the bye, we did not go near Slogh-na-Dyack. Lord Paulyn has lately bought a place on the coast here; a charming place, which he got a dead bargain. We'll go over and call to-morrow, if you like.'

'Haven't I told you that I don't want to renew my acquaintance with Lady Paulyn?'

'That sounds so ungracious; your old vicar's daughter, too. However, I suppose you have your own reasons.'

'I have. It's best to tell you the plain truth, perhaps; only mind it goes no farther, not even to Mrs. Mackenzie. Miss Luttrell and I were engaged to be married, and she flung me over for Lord Paulyn. That's the whole story. It's a thing of the remote past; a folly on both sides, no doubt; since she was created by nature to adorn the position she now occupies, and I had other hopes which I was willing to abandon for her sake. Do not think that I cherish any ill-feeling against her; only—only it might pain us both to meet.'

Mr. Mackenzie held his peace after this, and the two men made a circuit of the hill-side, and returned to the manse to dine on a cold roast of beef, as Mrs. Mackenzie called it, and a salad, in clerical fashion; content to consume their viands cold on the day of rest. But Mr. Mackenzie had a budget of news for his wife that night when they retired to their own chamber, and dutifully poured into her listening ear the story of Malcolm Forde's love-affair.

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# IMAGINARY LONDON

A delusive Directory

BY GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA

## XV. RHODODENDRON-TERRACE AND RAPKNUCKLE-PLACE, S.

THESE well-known (imaginary) blocks of buildings are both integral portions of the Great Rollingstone-road, S., which branches off from the left-hand side of that celebrated transpontine tavern and 'omnibus house,' the Hippopotamus and Hatbox. The Great Rollingstone-road—I never heard of a Little one by the same name—is confidently supposed, by the people who read gazetteers and take notice of milestones, to end at Rollingstone itself, an ancient borough on the sea-coast some eighty miles away. Such may, in effect, have been the case in the days when the gentry journeyed to distant portions of the island in their own travelling-carriages; or peradventure chartered yellow post-chaises, of which the postillions were frequently deaf, generally drunk, and invariably abusive and extortionate; when middle-class people availed themselves, according to their means, of the inside or the outside of the Prince Regent London and Rollingstone four-horse coach; when commercial travellers—erst rudely termed 'bagmen'—drove on their concerns in high-wheeled gigs, and sometimes even bestrode hard-trotting hacks; when country-girls going to service took the wagon; and when you and I, my nephew—I think the trick of apostrophising an imaginary colleague or disciple as our son or our brother has been done to death—were glad, when we had taken the King's shilling and were on our way to the recruiting dépôt, or when, having got tired of the King's shilling and his service to boot, we were running away from our regiment disguised in smockfrocks for which we had exchanged our military coatees with a Jew clothesman somewhere between London and Rollingstone, to walk. We do not walk now, my nephew, even when we are being passed to our parish as vagrant men, or when stern Sergeant Pike (it was his brother-in-law, Kite, who enlisted us) is conveying us, with gyves upon our wrists, to Shotdrill Gaol, as deserters. Nobody walks to Rollingstone, nor anywhere else nowadays, save collegians on their vacation, and War-office clerks on leave, who may do a little pedestrianising in very fine weather from wayside 'public' to 'public,' writing in advance to village landlords to secure clean beds and hot suppers; and who on their return, somewhat footsore, bronzed over the bridge of the nose, and thoroughly disgusted with the coarse and scanty fare

of the meaner English provincial inns, are somewhat consoled when, as they exhibit their knapsacks, dusty clouted shoon, alpen-stocks, and well-browned cutty pipes to their relatives and friends, those simple-minded folks jump at the conclusion that they have just returned from a walking tour in Switzerland. I have done the 'regular Swiss round,' as they call it, myself for less than five-and-twenty shillings, in a back garret in Soho; and I know how I bragged about the Grands Mulets and the Mer de Glace when I returned to my native country by way of St. Martin's-lane and the Strand. I didn't start the story of having been to Switzerland. 'Twas Grimshaw, who, meeting me in Covent-garden market as I was cheapening a mushroom to broil with my tea in Soho, clapped me on the back, and cried, 'Ha, my boy! we've heard all about you: how you punished that seltzer and cognac at Chamouni, and had that awful row the next day with the guide on the glacier. Wish I'd been with you. I'm an old Swiss bird, you know.' I don't believe Grimshaw ever went nearer Helvetia than the Swiss Cottage in the Regent's Park; but, after what he had said, I felt myself entitled to boast, and boasted accordingly. Do you blame me? Who objects so very strongly to be credited with having done more than he has achieved, or with being better than he is? Who that cries 'Nolo episcopari' feels not the kindly pressure of the mitre's brim on his brow, while his fingers itch to be clutching at the crozier? When my niece sings a song prettily (mispronouncing the Italian, of course, atrociously), and old Lusinghiero, that hoary evening-party flatterer, asks her whether 'twas from Costa or Benedict she took lessons, do you think that she has the frankness to admit that Miss Pinchcord, the walking governess (terms three guineas per quarter), was the only musical professor whose instructions she ever enjoyed? And an awful row there was on the subject with mamma, who held that my niece should have completed her education at school. She paid dearly enough for it, so mamma said; and, although the Misses Scrymgeour were always writing to say Lizzie must have more new music and more new boots, the poor child came home with nothing but a couple of English ballads in her répertoire, and with scarcely a shoe to her foot. Lusinghiero knows perfectly well that my niece never set eyes on Sir Michael or Sir Julius in her life, save perhaps at a Crystal Palace Concert or an Exeter Hall Oratorio. She is as truthful a little puss as pussies can well be, save when canary birds or cream are in the way. She would scorn to tell a fib—a deliberate fib, mind you—so she blushes scarlet, and hangs her head, and twiddles her bouquet; yet I happen to know, being her uncle, from whom of course she has no secrets, that from the summit of her tallest plait to the heels of her (far too tight) boots, there has passed a thrill of delight, and that she is as pleased as Punch. My nephew (I am incorrigibly avuncular), if you would get on in this



world—if you would gain land and beeves, and patent plans, and commissionerships—reverse Don Basilio's maxims, and *flattez, flattez, flattez toujours*. *Il en reviendra toujours quelque chose*. Sir Pertinax MacSycophant gave advice analogous to but not identical with mine. He only counselled 'booing.' Now, he who 'boos,' although he may succeed in time, must expect, in the outset, many and bitter rebuffs. It is often the lot of the 'booper' to be kicked. Not so with the flatterer. His reward is immediate. He is kissed. How was it that confidential beggar in the *Sentimental Journey* never failed to obtain alms when he asked? He whispered to all the women that they were beautiful, and the ugliest ones the rogues flattered most. *Experto crede*. It is an infallible plan. There is no use better for the richest oil than to put it on the tip of your tongue when you approach the human ear. The Serpent anointed his fang with the best fresh butter. Tell Sycorax that she is Psyché, and that her cub Caliban reminds you very much of the Marchioness of Paphos' infant (Millais, R. A.) in last year's Academy, and the hag will ask you to tea. And, hark in thine ear, nephew, Basilio's advice may be followed, too, in good time. To flatter people before their faces does not in the least militate against our abusing them like pickpockets behind their backs. Flattery is the fair, smooth, glowing face of the tapestry. Calumny stands out in jagged and gnarled knots and loops and tags at the back.

Now will I wager Lombard-street to a China orange that you have already begun to sit in the scorner's chair, and pointing at me disparagingly, have said: 'Lo, he is at his old tricks again. *Voi encore un plat de son métier*. Already, in a humdrum and hypocritical dissertation on Flattery (in which the man no more believes than he does in the Darwinian theory), he has wandered ten thousand parasangs away from Rhododendron-terrace and Rapknuckle place: if indeed he remembers anything about those imaginary localities. He has forgotten all about the Great Rollingstone-road and that it branched off from the left hand of an "omnibus house called the Hippopotamus and Hatbox. We were prepared to hear him chatter in his usual bold and desultory manner on the theme he proposed to himself and to us; but in lieu of this, he tells us about undergraduates and government-clerks going upon walking excursions; he bores us about Switzerland, and wearies us with sham Rochefoucauldisms about the pleasantness of undeserved praise. "Prisoner," said a Judge of Assize to a wretch shivering in the dock beneath him, "Providence has endowed you with health and strength instead of which, you go about stealing ducks!" That is his case. —Stop there, it is. I own my sin. Providence has gifted me with a variety of things: instead of which, I am always going about, not stealing ducks, at least making ducks and drakes of my endowments. But I can bring the ducks back. I can retrace my steps. I

can, if it be not stretching a metaphor too far, return to my mutations.

You thought to have caught me, O mine enemy. You lay on your stomach before my threshold (which you had previously buttered), and thought that I should have stumbled over you as I came out, sizing, as my habit is, starward. You are as arrantly mistaken as were those mischievous boys of Corinth who thought it such fine sport to pull the philosopher Diogenes over and over in his tub, little recking that the wise man, his finger to his nose, was watching his tormentors through the bung-hole, and would be down upon them, generally, with tardy but awful revenge. You shall admire the catastrophe of those graceless young Corinthians in the *Münchener Zilderbogen*. Now, I am not Diogenes, although I sincerely wish I were; for that heathen sage paid no rent for his residence, and was not compelled to wash or wear decent clothes; whereas I, in obedience to the stupid exigencies of modern society, am compelled to do the first in excess, and the last in moderation. I say, the first in excess. Who does not grumble at the rent he pays, be it that of a mansion in Belgravia or of a labourer's hovel in South Warwickshire—the miserable shanty, scarce large enough to hold one, but which holds ten, exclusive of the pig, who, like Herr von Joel at Evans's, 'in consideration of his services, is always retained upon the establishment'?

You have not caught me. Firm in my hand I hold the clue of the seeming labyrinth. You will be good enough to remember that, at my notice of my (imaginary) niece Lizzie, I mentioned that the Misses Scrymgoar were continually writing to her mamma for additional songs and boots for the use of my juvenile relative. Now, the Misses Scrymgoar were the principals of an establishment for the board and education of young ladies. They kept a very large school, not to put too fine a point upon it; and that school was called the Cedars, and was situate in the very midst of Rhododendron-terrace, Great Rollingstone-road, S. Now are you satisfied? Must thou have more, O mine enemy?

There were no cedars to be seen either in the front or the rear of the Misses Scrymgoar's establishment. The towering tree of Lebanon was not present, nay, not so much as the most stunted shrub of the cedarn species. It is true that drawing was one of the accomplishments most sedulously cultivated beneath the refined roof of the Misses Scrymgoar; thus the appellation given to their premises may have been dictated only by a spirit of refined hyperbole, and in reference to the number of H.B. and B.B. pencils, enshrined in symmetrical and fragrant cylinders of cedar, which were so plentifully supplied to the young-lady boarders, and so carefully yet so imaginatively charged for in the half-yearly accounts sent home to their fond and anxious parents. 'Does Lizzie eat pencils?' mamma



(a careful soul) was wont querulously to inquire, when she saw so many H.B.s and B.B.s—all Mordan's, all of the best Cumberland lead—entered in the beautifully-drawn-up (Whatman's best hand-made paper) bill. The Misses Scrymgoar were too upright and too high-minded to charge 'lump' sums. Every item of a young lady's educational consumption was scrupulously tabulated. There was no vulgar 'reduction on taking a quantity.' The more you had, the more you paid. But did the fair girl-undergraduates of the Ceda use all those H.B.s and B.B.s debited to them, I wonder? Did the pencils all come from Mordan? Were they all of the best Cumberland lead; or were they haply of the cheaper German fabric, the even less expensive manufacture of Mr. Moss Mosesheim of Little Shobbus-street, Cloth-fair? Four blooming daughters has Mr. Moss Mosesheim—all with eyes of almond shape and jetty fringe, all with lips ruddy as the poppies amidst the corn, or the coral brooches in Mr. J. W. Copernicus's shop in Old Buck-street; all with tresses dark as the pines in a vale of Norwegian larches. Three little sons has he—all with heads red as the rising morn; all with eyes like unto ferrets, and fingers like unto fishhooks. Four stalwart journeymen has he, with ringlets overshadowing their temples, and noses hooked like the prows of Roman galleys. And all day long, and often far into the night, do this interesting family, with the assistance of a circular saw, devote themselves to slicing, paring, chopping, glueing, papering, and packing black-lead pencils; while Mr. Moss Mosesheim, in his shirtsleeves, and with a big cigar in his mouth, sits in a tiny counting-house, counting out his money; and Mrs. Moss Mosesheim—a beauty in her time, my dear, but growing somewhat stout—lies perdu in the shades of the back-parlour frying fish for the entire tribe. Moss Mosesheim is getting on in the world. Twenty years ago a humble little Jew-boy, he did not make pencils, but bought them from old Barney Slypoke of Bevis Marks, to sell again, in conjunction with lemons and hundred-bladed penknives, at the White Horse Cellar, Piccadilly. Ten years hence the Mosesheims will have left the purlieu of Cloth-fair to dwell in palatial mansions in Belgravia and Tyburnia. They will have horses and carriages; and the shine of their diamonds will be like the coruscation of comets. *Sic itur ad astra.*

To my mind there are few things so admirable and wonderful in this life as the 'getting on,' as it is vulgarly termed, of the Hebrew race. For one of us who, by means of infinite wriggling, panting, toiling, struggling, and hanging on by his eyebrows, so to speak, to opportunity, contrives to emerge from obscurity, and ascend to the topmost round of the ladder, there seem to be at least five hundred Caucasian Arabs who attain the desired altitude; ay, and who manage to avoid turning giddy and toppling over. Most Jews seem to rise; and the instances of a Jew going 'to the utter bad,' as the

se runs, seem equally as rare. How often your successful Name comes to grief! At the moment you think him Lord of All, Master of Nothing.

'Ambition this shall tempt to rise,  
Then whirl the wretch from high,  
To bitter Scorn a sacrifice,  
And grinning Infamy.  
The sting of Falsehood those shall try,  
And hard Unkindness' alter'd eye,  
That mocks the tear it forced to flow;  
And keen Remorse with blood defiled,  
And moody Madness laughing wild  
Amid severest woe.'

ly Gray could not have written this about the ambition of . They appear to keep what they have gotten, and, what is better, to get more, and keep *that* too. They are not much given, I judge, to experiencing the pangs of remorse; and I cannot well imagine a mad Jew. It must be something awful.\* On the whole, looking at the vast number of Christians I have known who from honour have subsided into beggary, and the vast number of He-

I have often asked myself, lately passing, not the imaginary but the real Horse Cellar, what has become of the little Jew-boys who used to thrust their faces and penknives, their lemons and sponges, in at the omnibus windows (times to the imminent peril of the passengers' eyes) twenty, or even ten, years ago? Have they really deserted the place, finding elsewhere a market more profitable for their wares? or is it that I have ceased to ride in omnibuses, or am growing old and unobservant? In connection with Jew-boys and the Cellar, I turned up the other day, in an old newspaper, a very curious anecdote, which I fancy is worth recording. Some time in 1822 there was in town, on a trip from the rural districts, an old Tory gentleman, who was possessed by a burning desire to set eyes upon the minister *par excellence*, the Marquis of Londonderry, better known by his title of Lord Castlereagh. He had sought for the object of his hero worship many days, and with so much assiduity—at the Marquis's clubs, in Palace and in the precincts of Carlton House—that, looking at the unpopularity of Castlereagh with a good many Englishmen who were not Tories, I only wonder at Ruthven or Townshend, those famed Bow-street 'Runners,' did not arrest this quisitive stranger as a possible disciple of the school of Bellingham the assassin.

One afternoon this Coelebs in search of a statesman being in Piccadilly, near the White Horse Cellar, a London friend, who had been his mentor during his travels, touched him on the arm, and exclaimed, 'There, there goes his Lordship.' The enthusiast beheld a handsome dignified gentleman in a blue coat, swinging as to his gait, and, as our friend thought, with a somewhat stately expression of eye (overworked no doubt, and worried by those confounded affairs), crossing the road from the Green Park. His Lordship halted by the side of the omnibus; and his admirer, watching him attentively, saw him accost a Jew-boy, and receive from him a small white-handled penknife for a shilling. Then he strode on, and was lost in the great sea of Piccadilly life. Three days afterwards the Tory minister read with horror in the newspapers that the Marquis of Londonderry was

He had cut his throat at his seat near North Cray in Kent. At the inquest the small white-handled penknife, apparently quite new, was produced as the instrument with which the deed was done. I know nothing about the truth of this story; I tell it as I read it in a volume of the *Examiner* for 1822.



brews I have watched advancing, not from mendicity—a Jew never begs save from one of his own tribe, and then I suppose the transaction is more of the nature of a friendly loan, to be repaid with interest when brighter days arrive—but from extreme indigence to wealth and station, I incline to the opinion that Gentiles have natural alacrity in sinking—look how heavy I can be—but that the Chosen People have as natural a tendency towards buoyancy. The young man with the banner in Mr. Longfellow's ballad was, dependent upon it, an Israelite of the Israelites. Only I think the poet was wrong, as poets generally are, in his climax. The young man was not frozen to death. He made an immense fortune at the top of Mont Blanc by selling the 'Excelsior' penny ices.

Now a reader's malison—and a writer's likewise, if you care for that kind of anathema—on all H.B. and B.B. pencils, for keeping me so long on the threshold of the Cedars. After all, good folks, there is no need to use any naughty words about the delay. We are not called upon to cross the Cedar threshold at all. What do you and I, nephew, know about the penetralia of a ladies' boarding-school? Nothing beyond what our sisters or our sweethearts can tell us; and do you imagine that *their* confidences are complete? Error. An initiated one would as soon dream of divulging the secrets of the Eleusian mysteries. What were they like, I wonder? Dull, I should say. Most of the mysteries into which I have been initiated have proved desperately dull. The shepherd in Virgil who became acquainted with Love found him a native of the rocks, and a dismal bore into the bargain. The great masters of fiction who have tried their hands at descriptions of girls' schools have, as a rule, failed in their attempt. You will plead the wonderful 'Nun's House,' in the *Mystery of Edwin Drood*, in abatement to this assertion. Granted; but was there ever an absurder female seminary than the one near Bury St. Edmund's, into the garden of which Mr. Pickwick was inveigled by the unscrupulous Jingle and the artful Job Trotter? What a deplorable caricature was the picture of the boarding-school in one of Thackeray's earlier stories!—and Titmarsh could describe boy-school life so gloriously! In after-life, in his *magnum opus*, in *Vanity Fair*, the master was more discreet. He but entered into the vestibule; he did not strive to lift the veil of the temple; and his readers are only ushered into the parlour of Miss Pinkerton's academy at Chiswick. The great lexicographer who so awed Miss P. never probably went any farther. Did you, when you lectured to the fifty boarders at Mistletoe House on therapeutics and Etrurian philology? Did you when you taught the harp at Miss Bulger's at Sydenham? Did old Dr. Darwin, I wonder, when he wrote that wondrous quarto treatise of his about ladies' schools? There was a droll gross dog in Charles the Second's days, called Tom d'Urfey (he died very poor and unable, as droll gross dogs generally do), who was the author.

comedy called the *Boarding School*. In one scene a servant goes in a buck-basket full of bread-and-butter; in another she warns a sprightly young-lady pupil (who subsequently runs away with the writing master; it is true that he is a fine gentleman in disguise) that 'the governess has a great clawing rod amaking for me' and in another part of the play the stage directions set forth a 'posse of hoydens run on and romp about.' 'Hoydens,' 'run and romp about.' What *balivernes* are these? There is a modern version of the *Boarding School*, altered and made elegant by Mr. Bayle Ward, I think; but still lacking, to one's internal consciousness, in similitude. But go to the pictures of women's schools written by women. Go to the pages of Charlotte Brontë. Go to that awful school in *Jane Eyre*. What force, what fire, what pathos you find there; and, to a smaller extent, in all the Brontë sisters' stories of girl-school life! But the objection I have taken has its converse. Women, although they often educate boys, and educate them capitally too, are generally weak and unfaithful depictees of boys' schools. I do not even except the admirable Mrs. Lynn Linton from this censure. We have always the same semi-collegiate, High School establishment; the same high-spirited generous boys who never, no never, will betray one another, with a solitary sneak and traitor as a black sheep among the flock; always the same dummy tutor as head master, a bland old Molossus, with a pretty daughter (who marries a curate), who is always so extremely sorry to be combed to birch and expel the sneak and pilferer, and always so extremely fond of appealing—when a farmer's orchard has been rifled, or an old woman's stall blown up on Guy Fawkes' day—to the high sense of honour and moral feelings of his boys. 'It matters little to me,' says the Rev. Dr. Molossus, when, the sneak having been duly rated upon and bidden to pack up his trunks, he locks up the trunk in his bureau and puts the key in his pocket,—'It matters little to me whether your parents pay eighty, or a hundred, or a hundred-and-twenty guineas a year for your tuition and maintenance. I aspire to things far higher than pecuniary reward. I have an ambition to be something more than a mere imparter of a brilliant classical education. My ambition and my determination are to be the head of a community of Christian gentlemen.' Great applause, chiefly manifested by coughing, sniffing, and shuffling of feet. The boys go home very happy at not having been birched; and when they reach home for the holidays they tell their parents that Dr. Molossus says they are Christian gentlemen, and the parents are glad, and at Christmas time they send the Doctor baskets of game and barrels of oysters; at least they did in the days now fled—for ever fled? tell us, tell us, Mr. Frank Buckland—when oysters were not quite so dear as diamonds. How often, I wonder, has Dr. Arnold's famous speech to the Rugbeians after evening chapel been paraphrased and parodied,



ridden to death's door and run to earth, by the Dr. Molossuses of education? It was a good speech, but the Christian gentleman has been over-done within these latter days. We might give the Christian beggar, Lazarus, a turn.

Is *this* a digression? You say it is. Why, my good worthy creature, this is an educational article in the first place, and the transition from an Establishment for Young Ladies to an Academy for Young Gentlemen is the easiest one imaginable. In the next place, the Rev. Dr. Molossus's Collegiate Academy happens to be in Rapknuckle-place, on the same side of the way with Rhododendron-terrace, and within twenty doors of the Cedars. Now are you satisfied?

He is an imaginary schoolmaster, the pompous beneficent prig described in stories of boy-life written by ladies; and, if you please, we will be as reticent of entering his establishment as we were anon in impinging on the domains of the Misses Scrymgoar. For the rest, I am beginning to think that, for imaginary purposes, there has been sufficiency, if not satiety, of the descriptive process known as the Asmodean. Le Sage's *Lame Devil* achieved, no doubt, a wondrous task when he unroofed the houses of Madrid, and showed us all the humours and all the miseries, all the crimes and all the follies, of Madrid with the rapidity and with the exactitude of an instantaneous photograph. That which he did for the real city of the Mancanares, Carlyle did with equal acumen and fidelity, and with incomparable greater philosophy and eloquence, for the imaginary burg of Weissnichtwo. Finally, has not archæology, aided by Death—that perpetual President of the Society of Antiquaries, of which Time is only Hon. Sec.—laid bare the inner life of Pompeii, yea, even from the Forum to the Lupanar? Who shall do, who shall attempt, who shall hope to live to achieve the tithe of such a task when the city to be dissected is LONDON? Consider its three—or four—millions of souls. Remember the Frenchman's apophthegm, '*Londres n'est plus une ville; c'est une province couverte de maisons.*' Despairing, then, of cramming the matter of an encyclopædia within the compass of a slim pamphlet, the imaginary pilgrim may well be content, and may assume that he has not altogether wasted his time, if he lets the interiors of the houses alone and confines his attention to externals. I remember being told once by an American friend that on his first visit to London, having mislaid the desk containing his letters of introduction, and being totally destitute of acquaintances in the three-or-four-million-peopled metropolis, he found time at last hang somewhat heavy on his hands, until it occurred to him to mount to the roof of an omnibus, and suffer himself to be driven the length of the vehicle's appointed course, without asking any questions. The next day he hailed an omnibus pursuing a different route, and so on, day after day. 'I never had such a good time in my life,' quoth the candid New Yorker, 'and three weeks passed away before one had to say "hurry up cakes."' The names

of the dealers over the fronts of their stores were a whole Encyclopaedia Metropolitana in themselves, and the sight of the people looking out of the first-floor windows, and *thinking what they were thinking of*, was as good as a play.' I am *terræ filius*; my purview is earthward; and an immensity of matter for cogitation comes to me in studying the brass-plates, and even the knockers and bell-handles, on the doors; while larger fields for philosophising offer themselves when you take to looking down the areas. There are fortunately no areas, but only grated *soupirails*, or cellar entrances, the Cedars and to Dr. Molossus's Academy; but there were brass-plates on the portals, and they became to me tablets whereon to write imaginary annals. Take my advice, ye who would emulate the ancients, by knowing men and cities, and never neglect to con the door-plates. Even those, battered, tarnished, their inscriptions half obliterated, unscrewed years perchance from their original panels, and hanging loose on brokers' stalls and in second-hand dealers' windows, present infinite matter for profound reflection. They are as plates enched from the coffins of dead families. They smell mouldy of the graves of households; and I may discreetly hint that the view of two such doorless plates, one of brass and the other of zinc, but both having references in blunted lines to the education of youth, set the dull imagination in a German-tinder-like state of incandescence, and made me think there might be such phantom schools as the Misses Rymgoar's and Dr. Molossus's, in Rhododendron-terrace and Rap-tackle-place, Great Rollingstone-road, S.

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## LA BELLE SAUVAGE

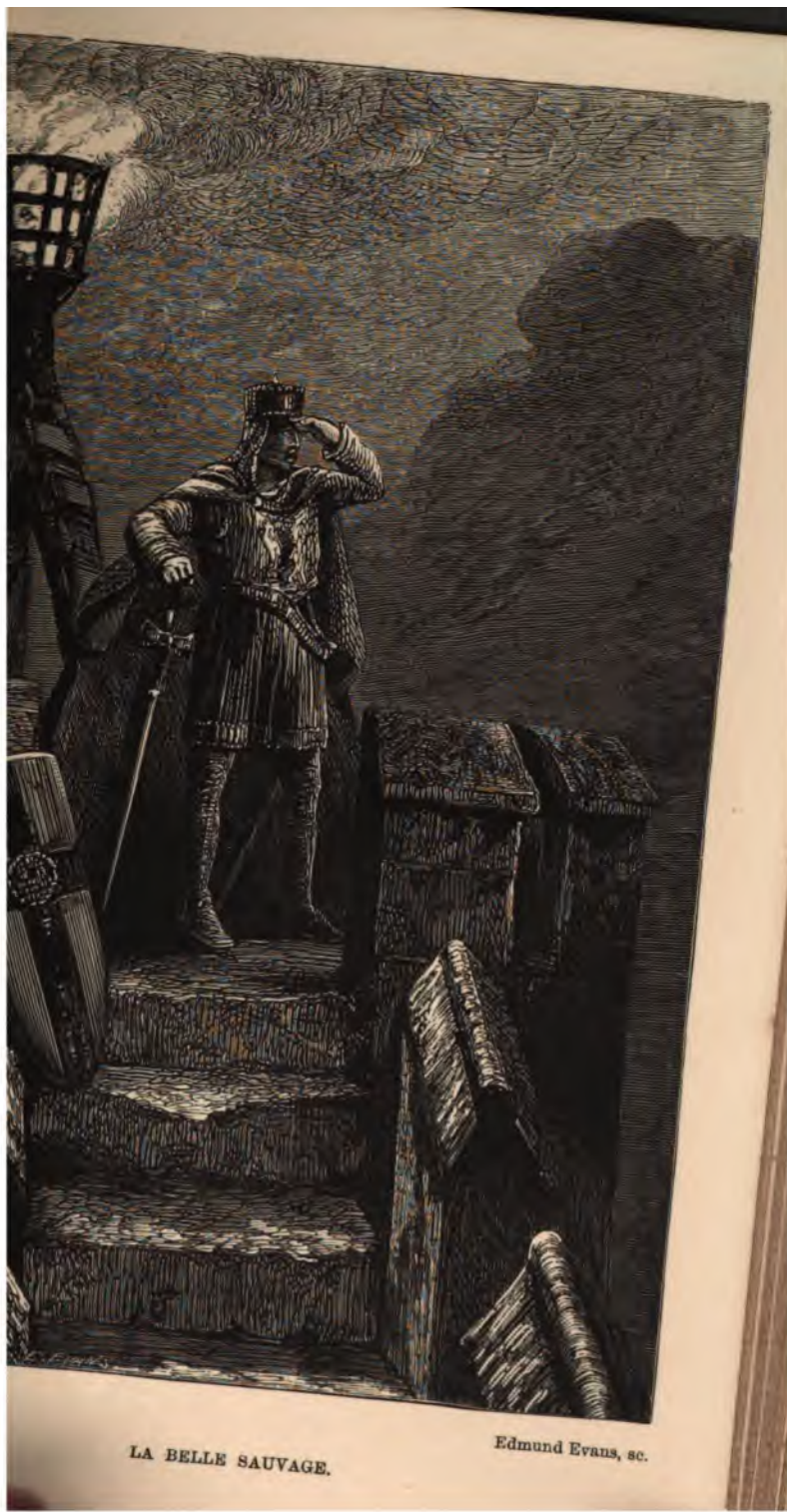
SAD, ragged shore of Brittany, long wed  
To death, where by false fires fix'd on the head  
Of feeding kine, as an old record saith,  
Full many a wandering sailor once was led  
To grasp for friend's hand the cold hand of Death ;  
Thine income of ripe sorrows is less rich  
Now from thy cruel creeping waves, o'er which  
A woman's beacon broadly throws its breath.

It breathes far-saving fires into the night,  
Set on her husband's battlements, to fright  
Stray ships from that inhospitable strand ;  
And under it, all fully arm'd to fight  
Those who would strip the dying, with maim'd hand  
Grasping his sword which gleams in the flamelike gore,  
After the oath he to his lady swore,  
Stands he, and so till death each night will stand.

Had he not sworn to her, ' May I ride in rain  
Blind, nor my heron seek marsh or cloud again,  
Nor any lure or quarry more be mine ;  
Yea, may my hawk no more strike swan or crane,  
When this thy beacon I forget to tine !  
Then from the fight may I be first to flee,  
Then may fair breezes fail me on the sea,  
When night's waves roll not lighten'd by its shine' ?

For once himself, lying shipwreck'd on that shore,  
A girl had spied, who with fierce fingers tore  
From his body, half dead, a rich and varied prize ;  
And a gem which his wet swollen finger bore,  
With one knee on his breast, her wild brown eyes  
Fix'd on his dying eyes, with white sharp teeth  
Had sever'd from his hand, biting beneath  
The jewel, nor pitied him in anywise.

But left him, yet soon after, by some shade  
Of sorrow touch'd, return'd. But he afraid,  
Wonder'd how Death should take a form so sweet,  
More wonder'd when she tended him, and made  
Bands for his wound, and when with tottering feet



LA BELLE SAUVAGE.

Edmund Evans, sc.





She bore him to her cabin, where he conceal'd  
Lay all alone, until his wound was heal'd,  
While she halved her poor living for his meat.

Fair was she? Ah, far more fair than I can say,  
Fairer than sunshine on a summer's day,  
With smooth small throat, round arms, and sorrel hair :  
Dearer than sun or shadow, or rose of May,  
Or April rain ; one hundredfold more fair  
Than all maids she to him, who marvell'd yet  
How, looking on her face, he must forget  
Her deeds, not knowing marvels of love more rare.

For women's power is such, that as they please  
They can make ease of hardship, of hardship ease,  
And false of true, and true of false again,  
And of men's hearts in their hands they hold the keys,  
And cure with one little kiss a harder pain  
Than Galen's herbs can cure. Men gods have grown,  
And gods, to change to men for these alone,  
Nay, to be brutes, for their dear sake once were fain.

So hour by hour he loved her more and more,  
And with soft words and wise, which good fruit bore,  
Tamed her wild hard heart to his gentle hand,  
As when Spring's day-star breaks dark Winter's floor,  
And snow and frost flee frighten'd from our land.  
Thus he baptised her to a milder creed,  
Making each thought of cruelty and greed  
Leave her, a new and gracious deodand ;

And christen'd her with kisses to his wife,  
And dwelt in that stern land, albeit the strife  
Sown in her soul made her sad harvest reap  
Of tears, and she grew weary of her life,  
And for past sins went sighing unto sleep,  
Sobbing on sorrow's sackcloth like a child ;  
So, till he swore to rule that people wild  
With rapine, and his lonely watch to keep.

Therefore he stands high on his topmost tower  
Alone, and watches many a leaden-heel'd hour,  
Through the deep darkness of blind night's dead noon ;  
Nor wintry wind, nor might of sleet, or shower  
Of summer hail, may move him, till the moon  
Dims in the western heaven her blunted horn,  
And the last star, failing in the face of morn,  
Leads him to her soft side, ah ! not too soon.

JAMES MEW.



## IN A COUNTRY HOUSE

### VII. THE SERVANTS' BALL.

It is undoubted that in a country house the etiquette of the steward's room and servants' hall is far more strictly observed than in the drawing-room. Servants are far more tenacious of their privileges as members of society than their masters. The precedence of lady's maids or 'gentlemen's gentlemen' is a much greater subject of discussion and debate than with their masters and mistresses. 'Please, ma'am, don't you go in before Mrs. General Jones?' because his lordship's valet took her in and not me last night, said I would complain to you. Please, ma'am, if I'm to be present again, I'd like to leave.' It is only occasionally that through 'chink in the world above, where they listen for words from below' come rumours of the doubts and difficulties which agitate the people down-stairs, and disturb their equanimity. But on certain occasions the intense fondness of servants for etiquette is shown, and no occasion is better adapted for this than the servants' ball.

Generally at Christmas, but sometimes later in the country season, perhaps just before the 'family' leave for London, the servants' hall is given up to festivity. Permission has been obtained from the master, and the steward's wife has issued invitations to a select circle. The room is suitably decorated, preparations are made for dancing, and the fiddler from the neighbouring town has been provided with a new white waistcoat for the occasion. All the housemaids have been saving up their money for weeks past, and are enabled to appear in clean white muslins, tied with simple but becoming ribbons. Biddy, the Irish girl, has got her favourite green, and Sandy has her tartan. The upper servants are more gorgeous. The housekeeper is stately in black silk, cut after an extremely old fashion, and her neat white cap is arranged with extra care. My lady's maid is the smartest of all, but then, you know, she has certain advantages. The prettiest person in the room is sure to be the housekeeper's daughter, whose dark speaking eyes and rosy cheeks show that she has shared in the healthy out-of-door life of her father. The great lady is the steward's wife. She receives the guests and does so with all the diplomacy and skill of any dowager in Belgium or Mayfair. Observe the distinctions of her greeting as the different people come. She has made room for the housekeeper by her own presence, for they are closely-allied powers, and are rival queens of the servants' hall. She shakes hands with the coachman's wife with some show of

diality, but only bows to the head gardener's sister; she is all smiles to the wife of a large neighbouring tenant, for whom she arranges her petticoats so as to make room on the bench beside her. But she stares blankly at the lady of the groom of the chambers, with whom her husband has had some words. She is glad to see the landlady of the village inn, and is graciously condescending to her little niece. But she entirely ignores the wife of the man who keeps the grocery shop, and has nothing to say to the postman's mother.

Her husband, too, the steward, is not a little called upon. He bustles about with a combination of alacrity and dignity which does credit to his zeal and his pride. He is dressed with greater scruple than usual; his shirt-front would do honour to Beale and Inman; and if his coat has not the cut which distinguishes that of his master—and say what you will, a servant's clothes, by whomsoever they be made, are always somehow different from a gentleman's clothes—it nevertheless is highly honourable to his tailor. He does not do the amount of reception that falls to the share of his wife, but he has a word to say to many of the heads of various departments. The stud and pad grooms, the bailiff, the head park-keeper, are all greeted friendly; but if there is one whose welcome is warmer than that of others, it is the butler at the Rectory, who for many years has been trusted for advice as to the quality of any particular bin.

But when all is ready, the company from up-stairs have to be summoned. They are probably not very numerous, for servants' balls usually take place in the middle of a family party, and not when the house is filled with strangers. The opportunities, moreover, for valsing and flirtations are not sufficiently numerous to make a servants' ball popular with young ladies. The circle therefore in the drawing-room who are waiting for the announcement that all things are ready is probably not very large.

On their arrival in the servants' hall, the master and mistress of the house are received with applause, and the fiddler strikes up a country dance. (As to this name, by the bye, a delusion is very common. It is not 'country' dance, a dance which is in vogue in the country, but 'contre' dance, a dance in which the gentlemen stand opposite to the ladies.) The steward puts on his glove, and makes a bow to his mistress, while his wife or the housekeeper is conducted to her master. Aunt Jane probably gets the pad groom, an old retainer whose knowledge of horses is only equalled by his love of the family. My lady's maid is led out by young Lawless, and Jack Lovelace the guardsman makes a violent set at the game-keeper's daughter, who is distracted between her admiration of the handsome young swell and her constancy to her own lover Joe. The fiddler plays three bars rather out of tune, and then, recovering him-



self and getting into his stride, plunges away at the melody of the Triumph.

The beauty of the Triumph is that there is a philosophy about it. It is none of your whirligigs with no meaning; it conveys a criticism on life, and points a moral it were well to observe. The presumption is that with the partner of each gentleman the individual below him begins a vigorous flirtation; it is successful for a moment, and the new friend conducts the fair lady down the room, with nimble steps, to the tune of an inspiring jig. The true lover follows disconsolate, and for a time it seems as though infidelity would win the day. Not so, however; for at the bottom of the room the music changes, the true lover ousts the false swain, and leads his fair one back to her place with action expressive of glee and triumph, and finally all join hands as a sign that

‘Amantium iræ amoris integratio est.’

After the first country dance, the servants are still a little shy; but when, after having rested his nimble fingers for a few moments—they are very few—and having had a pull or two at the lemonade or punch that falls to his share, the fiddler strikes up a well-known polka, shyness is thrown to the winds, and the real enjoyment of the evening begins. Servants are great conservatives; they are apt to cling to customs and institutions which have up-stairs long yielded to the influence of time. It may be that, inasmuch as they follow the example to no small extent of their employers, the touch of the gentleman with the scythe reaches them the less quickly; but from that or other reason it is a fact that old habits are observed among servants which elsewhere have passed away. Thus it is that the polka is still popular, and is the one dance in which servants really excel. The ingenuity and indefatigability with which the polka is danced is incredible to those to whom a short quick even spin to a good waltz is the height of Terpsichorean felicity.

The steward leads the way, and his lordship's valet follows him. Neither of these is good at a polka, for they are beginning to awake to the conviction that it is a little out of date. But they are not reformers enough to change, so they plunge away with less accuracy than dignity.

The pad groom is great at a polka. His gaiters are additionally tight, his all-rounder extra stiff, and with one more fold than usual. His gloves are silk, and the thumb is somewhat long; but his whiskers are so carefully cut, and his hair so egregiously smooth, that he is contemplated with admiration by the fairer portion of the establishment. He is a character, is Robert. He is excessively decorous. He ‘kep company’ once in his life, but is believed never to have ventured a proposal of marriage. He is extremely respectful to those above him. He is careful how he speaks to his master; but some-

ow has got into a confusion in his grammar, and always addresses him as 'No, his lordship,' 'Yes, his lordship.' When a new horse came home called Charlie, he took to the name readily, but he always spoke of it as Charles to his master, not thinking a nickname signified. The keepers make fun of him behind his back, but dare not wink when he is present. His polkaing is a sight to see; he holds his partner's right hand well into the button of his coat; and the elevation of his left foot is marvellous. His face wears an expression of amusement, but about the corners of his mouth there is a curl which gives the idea that he would sooner be seeing after the 'osses' than galloping a filly round a ballroom.

The Scotch gamekeeper 'canna be persuaded to dance.' 'Nae, nae, a dinna ken they new-fangled hoppings; an they gie me a guid reel, a'll do my best; but a canna gae twirling around like the roth on reever Tay.' He keeps a stern but fond eye on his bonnie lassie for the earlier part of the evening, and watches her with admiring eyes as she wanders off on Joe's arm, or looks daur and doubtful when young Lovelace asks for her hand. Alas, as time wears on, his visits to the table are frequent and more frequent, till at last his care for his daughter is merged into the caution required to keep his head.

It is a point of honour with those who polka at a servants' ball never to stop as long as the music goes on. A rest for a number of bars is not the fashion. *Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte*; and if you have once begun, you are bound in honour to go on till all is over. Inasmuch as human endurance will not stand more than a certain amount, the efforts of the musician are often limited. But it is rarely that expressions of breathlessness are not seen and admired by such as have the audacity to set Mrs. Grundy at defiance, and pause in the middle of the dance. The gallant movements backwards and forwards, up and down, wrong way round, and wrong foot foremost, which signalise the opening of the polka, ere long give place to symptoms of pluck—possibly, but certainly of fatigue. The face of Jeames, the stalwart footman, has assumed a look of grave determination; a sort of never-give-in expression, unrelieved by the pleasure of hearing the music or escorting a fair partner. Biddy is getting rather red, and on the coachman's forehead beads of anxiety glisten visibly. Nevertheless, the kick of the left foot is maintained resolutely, and deuce a bit of relaxation is there till the fiddler throws his soul into a final bar, and there is a general pant of relief.

A valse probably succeeds, at which the groom of the chambers and the new London footman shine preëminent. The others dance with their extraordinary bobbing step, marked by a sort of curtsy at the beginning that is a special accomplishment of servants. It differs somewhat from the stage 'troistemps,' which is seen in Faust,



and 'toto globo' from the valse of the London ballroom. The two, however, mentioned above have had higher experience; they turn up their noses at the country valse of their colleagues, and dance a sort of circular hop which they have probably learned at the Holborn Casino.

The outdoor servants do not attempt a valse. It is regarded as something too mysterious for rash undertaking, and Robert looks on with half-contemptuous, half-admiring eyes at the efforts of Jeame and Mr. Robbins. A few of the maids are persuaded to indulge but the effort is a failure, and not many are sorry when the music comes to an end.

The ordinary dances having been accomplished, a variety of more abstruse affairs ensue. Varsovianas, schottisches, redowas, all involving more or less powers of hop, and the Caledonians, than which nothing requiring more endless endurance can be imagined. The latter is somewhat involved too, and unless danced accurately is apt to lead to misadventures. On one occasion, at a servants' ball, gallant old soldier, to whose martial prowess England owes not little, was asked if he could dance the Caledonians. He who has faced death in a thousand shapes was not going to be daunted by such a query, so he boldly answered Yes, and took his place in the fond hope that his intuitive power of discovering the unknown would lead him right. Alas, his partner went one way and he went another, and he was at last found pulling his shirt-sleeves at the exact opposite of the room to that corner where his pretty partner waited for him disconsolate. He was reluctantly obliged to admit that the dance had been modified since he danced it, which was strictly true though perhaps involving a *suggestio falsi*.

What a dance is an Irish jig, and where is it so well seen in England as at a servants' ball! Over the water there are few village fairs where you will not have an opportunity of seeing the boys talking the 'flure'; but in England people rarely have an opportunity of seeing a jig properly danced. There is no dance where the movements of the dancers are so aptly described by the time-honoured phrase, 'many twinkling feet.' Watch a well-made Tipperary girl dancing a jig 'wid a good boy on the flure wid her.' Her feet pop out and in from the shade of her neat dress with a celerity and a grace unequalled in any other exercise. The reel of the Scotch Highland is accurate and full of vigour, but for real agile merriment there is nothing like an Irish jig. Set a fiddler playing 'St. Patrick's-day in the Morning,' and get Mick the stable-boy and Biddy the maid to stand 'foreninst' one another, and then see how they will set the hearts into the dance, and make you wonder which sparkle most their ankles or their eyes.

The 'drawing-room company' do not stay late at the servant ball. About twelve o'clock the steward proposes three cheers for

the master and mistress of the house, which are given with all the breath which has neither been used nor is being reserved for the worship of Terpsichore; and after that ceremony the ladies and gentlemen of up-stairs leave the ladies and gentlemen of down-stairs, and retire to their own regions. Sometimes an enthusiastic young guardsman or a college freshman will stay late in the vain hope of a mild flirtation with some village beauty; but he is certain ere long to find that she incomparably prefers the society of her own class, and would infinitely sooner dance with a valet than his master.

## VIII. SUNDAY.

WE have lately been told by a great authority, with all the gravity necessary to a speech made at the close of a famous debate, that 'we live in an age when young men prattle about protoplasm, and when young ladies talk atheism, in gilded saloons.' Than the author of *Lothair* there are few men who have shown greater ability in describing English country-house life; but it is impossible for any attentive reader of his works to escape the suspicion that the spirit of humour is sometimes too strong in him for the spirit of accuracy. In *Lothair*, for instance, there is somewhat of ridicule traceable in the description of the formalities on the Sunday after Lothair's coming of age, and an impression is given that English men and English women make a show indeed of careful observances, but do so for social rather than higher reasons. And this impression would not be consistent with the facts. For those who have most carefully watched the manners of our generation will find it difficult to say that there is not shown in an English country-house Sunday a spirit of religion much at variance with the spirit of indifferentism of which we are so often accused. It is urged against us that freedom of thought and love of inquiry have done much to mar our religious character; that people who do go to church do so because others do so, because an open disregard of religion is unnecessary and unfashionable, because 'it is right to give a good example, you know,' and for other equally valid reasons; but that few go to church to benefit themselves, or because they think it their undoubted duty. Now, such an accusation is quite unfounded. In London indeed, and in the large towns, there may be too much fondness shown for smart dresses and popular preachers, but the simple habits of the majority of English country houses on Sunday tend to other things than a display of oratory or silk. To attempt an elaborate defence of the national character, as regards religion, in a series of papers intended to touch solely on some superficial points in our social manners, would be entirely out of place; but to criticise country-house life without alluding to Sunday would be to make an omission; and it may be possible, without being tedious,



to say a little in opposition to the theory that the English classes are deeply irreligious.

The characteristic of country churches, as of country manners, is simplicity. The choral service, with the magnificence of its ceremonial, the rich vestures, the impressive procedure, the subtilty, and the many effects which in urban churches are thought to influence the minds of congregations, exist not in the country churches; their stead are unpretending music, pure daylight, the plain vestment, a surplice, an unadorned ceremonial, unaffected devotion. The ministerial discourse, full of abstruse lore, and aimed at proving conclusions which no one denies, by arguments involving, *petitione principii*, the conclusions sought to be established, or the eloquent criticism of subtle points of character, which is calculated rather to amuse the intellect than encourage the inclination,—is not; and its place is the short, earnest, intelligible exhortation, that acts rather as a prop than a telescope to the wayfarer.

It is very extraordinary how few clergymen understand the art of preaching a good sermon. The majority of them aim at laborious essays, magnifying simple facts into great and essential truths, distorting the plain history with which they deal, so as to support theories developed solely from their own idiosyncrasies. A celebrated actor was once asked by a clergyman why the effect of his acting was so much greater than the effect of a sermon. 'Because,' he replied, 'we deliver our fictions as if they were truths; you deliver your truths as if they were fictions.' The answer was wise, and pointed out one of the reasons which, for many generations in England, have weakened the influence of the pulpit. The manner of clergymen is not their only weak point. They insist on aiming too high. Language suited for a commentary, presumably, and in the speaker's opinion, adapted for an extended treatise, is listened to wearily by an audience who may possibly admire the talents, but can never be affected by the argument of the preacher. The short simply-worded address, framed as a practical exhortation against dangers which are practically felt, good is it, but how rare! The benefits conferred by such a sermon assuredly far outweigh the reputation gained by the brilliant learned eloquence, of which the influence has passed away with the luncheon.

The rapidity of our movements and the great facilities for travelling have materially shortened the period of country-house visits, and, as a rule, the inside of a week is the limit of a stay. Hence it is that those who spend a Sunday in the house of a friend are admitted somewhat more closely into the inner circle of his life than those who have constituted the weekday party. Sunday is the festival day, the day on which the duties of hospitality yield to those of relationship; when brothers and sisters, and husbands and wives

by a tacit understanding allowed to be with each other without infringing the rules of courtesy to their guests. And those guests are permitted to be present at, even if they do not share in, the more familiar intercourse which takes place between members of the same family.

It is rarely that there is not a village church close to a country house, but where this is the case, the majority of houses have a private chapel and a private chaplain. It often happens that either the mistress herself, or one of that useful body, 'the young ladies,' is fond of music, and takes an interest in teaching the schoolchildren or a select choir to sing the simpler portions of the best composers. Nothing can be a greater instance of the kindly relations which, in spite of the taunts of agitators, exist between the upper and lower classes, than the readiness with which the former teach and the latter learn the lessons pertaining to the service of the Church.

Most employers are anxious to save their servants as much as possible on Sunday, and have no better way of doing so than by abstaining from the use of carriages. With many it is a principle not to use carriages on Sunday; but there are, of course, far more who do not act on this. On one occasion a reverend prelate declared his intention of acting on this principle. His host endeavoured to persuade him to accept a seat in the carriage which was going to church, but the bishop was firm, and started on his walk. When about three-fourths of the way the carriage passed him endeavouring to shelter himself from the effects of a heavy shower. His host put his head out of the window, and said :

'How blest is he who ne'er consents  
By ill advice to walk !'

The bishop went on :

'Nor stands in sinners' ways, nor sits  
Where men profanely talk ;'

and was held to have had the best of the encounter.

Another way of sparing servants is by having a cold dinner or a 'high tea.' This is probably a mistake. It entails more trouble to provide tea and coffee at one end of the table, and claret and champagne at the other, or a combination of marmalade and eggs with entrées and cold game, than the ordinary requirements of the dinner-table; and as far as abstinence or self-denial goes, it is as absurd to imagine that it is practised at a high tea as it is for those who eat a hearty dinner of excellent fish to think that they are fasting.

The high tea is a desolate entertainment, eminently calculated to produce a fit of seriousness, but scarcely of that seriousness which its advocates contemplate. It encourages no conversation; it develops in every one a sort of feeling of unusualness—a suspicion that something has happened, you cannot tell what. It is like a com-



bination of an east wind in March with a damp fog in November. People generally end by eating more at it than they would eat at an ordinary dinner, and, as has been pointed out, it rarely saves the servants trouble. It is well, therefore, that our asceticism does not encourage it, and that in the majority of country houses it is unknown.

#### IX. GOING AWAY.

As it is better to arrive just before dinner, so it is better to go away just after breakfast. To welcome the coming, speed the parting guest, is the duty of all who dispense hospitality. But the latter is even more difficult than the former. 'I am very sorry you are going,' a well-known hostess used to say, sometimes aloud; 'but as you must go, I wish you would be off at once.' Of all dreary times in a country house, by far the dreariest is the morning on which you are leaving, if your train does not go till about one o'clock. You are fidgety and restless; you cannot undertake anything definite; and you hover about, twiddling your fingers, looking blank and getting in everybody's way.

Sad is it to have anything to do with a nervous person on the eve of a departure. Sir Charles le Fever is such a one. 'Mind you, dear, be sure now you have all your things packed. Mind your maid is quite ready to start at half-past eleven punctually. You will be late for the train; mark my words. I am sure you will.' The train does not go till twelve, and it is ten minutes' drive to the station; but at eleven o'clock Sir Charles is hurrying up-stairs and down-stairs; in and out of his wife's room, hindering her and her maid; blowing up his own servant, perpetually looking at his watch, fussing and fuming, putting his 'little things' now here and now there, and continually asking whether the carriage has come. He insists on sending his luggage down to the station beforehand, even if he does not send it on by an earlier train; and the result is that it gets wet at the station or lost on its way. He says good-bye to his host ten minutes before it is time to start, and consequently keeps him waiting, saying those last words which are such an intolerable nuisance, and which every sensible person cuts short; and in a word, he makes himself so fidgety that every one is glad when he is gone.

Equally sad is it to have to do with one who errs in unpunctuality, on the other side. Mrs. de Laye is never in time for anything. She invariably arrives at dinner with the fish, and on the eve of any expedition is certain to appear composedly—looking very smart and perfectly unconcerned—ten minutes after every one else is ready. Her husband succeeded for a considerable time, by telling her that the carriage started a quarter of an hour before it did; but one unlucky day she happened, by some marvellous combination

circumstances, to be punctual to the false time named, and her wrath was so great—partly at being tricked and partly at being kept waiting—that she, for the next month, was later than ever, and on three consecutive occasions had to travel by herself.

Lawless is one of the unconcerned, happy-go-lucky school, and takes no trouble about anything because life is too short to bother oneself about trifles. The result is that he never looks after his things, and is probably playing a game of billiards up to the last minute of going; when he proceeds leisurely and calmly to get into whatever greatcoat he can find, take the first of his many hats that comes to his hand, and get into the carriage or omnibus just as if he had not left half his property behind. He started on a tour of visits once with two portmanteaus full of Mr. Poole's *chefs-d'œuvre*; he ended it with a hat-box and some one else's rug.

The Grandisons are most luxurious in their movements, but they have excellent servants, and leave everything to them. His lordship acquired the habit of trusting entirely to some one else in India, where he had a high official position. The result is that he never troubles himself about anything except to say where he is going. It is amusing to see them put into the train. They have a saloon-carriage, of course; into this are put his writing-cases, his travelling-bag, Lady Grandison's footstool, her hot-water bottle, her extra sealskin-jacket, her basket of travelling literature, her work-basket, his greatcoats, his pile of sticks, all the newspapers of the day, her ladyship's dressing-case, two travelling clocks, and a dozen or so of small parcels which cannot be trusted to the luggage-van. At the end of the journey all these are in hopeless confusion, and for about a quarter of an hour his lordship's valet, her ladyship's maid, and the extra footman endure the tortures of the wicked, whilst their master and mistress are whirled off quietly in their brougham.

The conduct of young ladies on the eve of a departure is interesting to watch. They are more than ever affectionate one with the other. They exchange more 'dears' even than usual. Those that stay are sedulous in their attentions to those that go. They will sit and watch them affectionately till it is time to dress—in silence generally; for somehow the approaching separation has chilled conversation, and nothing much is said. Photographs, however, are exchanged, and much is done in the way of good wishes for the future. At the last minute there is an immense amount of kissing done, and 'gush' is very much to the front. Finally, last words have to be said and resaid, till there is a sharp reprimand from some authoritative voice, and the dear things are torn asunder for it may be a month.

It is impossible for any one—man, woman, or child, idler or worker, bachelor or husband—to look upon the end of a pleasant



country-house visit with anything but a feeling of pain. There is something in the sensation that a happy time has gone that never may be repeated, which produces a sinking of the courage and a little regret. When you have been one of a party—each member of which has got acquainted with the other—who have come to appreciate each other, who have known each other's ways and enjoyed each other's society, you look forward with equal dread to the period of solitude or to the necessity of beginning all over again elsewhere. In these spasmodic days, when short visits are the rule, you have no sooner shaken off the feeling of strangeness than you have to say good-bye; but even in the old days of longer stay or in Scotland, where hospitality is not so jumpy, the end of a pleasant visit appears all too soon. For to whatever it may be your fate to turn, whether to dreary business or fresh pleasure, whether to farther amusements or the *fumum et opes strepitumque Romæ*, you feel sorry when you have to shake your host's hand, and thank him for the happiness you have had in his country house.

EDMUND COURTENAY.

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## SOLVITUR AMBULANDO

ercise or recreation is less appreciated, or more generally de- than walking. Great walking propensities are frequently ted with a temperament which Voltaire would call *triste* and *pire*, and with mental unrest. De Quincey interests us in rt narrative of 'Walking Stuart,' who certainly was eccentric pochondriacal.

e immortal Teufelsdröckh, when his mind is agitated and dis- in the course of his transition from the 'Everlasting No' to verlasting Yea,' is represented as an everlasting walker : is so unlimited wanderings are without assigned or perhaps ble aim ; internal unrest seems his sole guidance ; he wan- danders, as if that curse of the prophet were upon him, and e made "like unto a wheel."

e history of the Wandering Jew is probably familiar to most

hiller's Pilgrim describes his objectless pedestrian excursions following words :

'Nimmer, nimmer stand ich still ;  
Aber immer blieb's verborgen  
Was ich suche, was ich will.'

ldsmith in his *Traveller* alludes to

'His prime of life in wandering spent, and care.'

w exercises, however, are more beneficial or pleasurable than y walks, in the matter of which Dr. Arnold was always enthu- . Place him in any town, and he would soon know the sur- ing country better than an ordinary native or resident, who is lly ignorant on this subject. Writing to an old pupil at Ox- he says : 'Not to mention Bagley Wood, do you know the alleys that debouch on the valley of the Thames, behind the ys ? Do you know Horspath, nestling under Shotover ; or ld, on its green slope ; or all the variety of Cumnor Hill ; or ider skirmishing ground by Beckley, Stanton St. John's, and -hill ?' An average undergraduate would answer 'No' to all questions. Walks, except on the Sundays which occur in the devoted to training, are voted slow.

r. Johnson, it is true, was contented with strolls in the streets, o one will deny that such perambulations may be interesting e student of human nature ; but are there not times when, ed down with *ennui*, tired of ourselves and our fellow beings,



we loathe the monotonous recurrence of bricks and mortar, and boundless prospect of streets, with their never-ending sea of human faces?

And the sense which, of all others, requires most relief, we not hesitate to say is that of sight. A walk in the country, then, gives relief to the eye by supplying a change of visual objects. Of course it is necessary that these fresh objects, while they relieve sight, should at the same time be of such a nature as to excite agreeable emotions in the mind.

A walk in some parts of the Fens, for instance, where a fine view is a rarity, and where the country generally is 'as flat as a sixpence' may furnish us with a change of visual objects; but these objects excite little interest in the mind of a non-scientific man. Under such circumstances, our walks degenerate into 'constitutional.'

But let us take the unscientific man, and suppose him, after crossing Blackheath, to have reached the top of Shooter's Hill any autumn afternoon, at about 3.30. The view of the country from Shooter's Hill is at all times pleasant. Lord Byron described the prospect of London from this place—

'A mighty mass of bricks and smoke and shipping,'

He also alludes to

'That bee-like, babbling, busy hum  
Of cities that boil over with their scum.'

But London and its scum are what we want to get rid of, and therefore let us look on the other side. Our guide-book talks of the landscape and the *memorabilis amœnitas*, which an old topographer speaks of as *pene citius animus quam oculus diffudit aspectu, Britannia tantum, sed fortasse totâ Europâ, pulcherrimo*. On an average fine day in autumn the prospect is pleasant enough; the view at the time above mentioned was extraordinarily beautiful. There had been a storm of rain, after which the sun shone with uncommon brilliancy, and (to speak in common language) two rainbows were visible. The Thames on our left, and the country miles around, seemed to be brought almost beneath one's feet; the tint and colour of every object borrowed indescribable beauty from the condition of the atmosphere.

Such an atmospheric effect, and such a landscape, were calculated to rouse one's strongest emotions and one's deepest admiration for and appreciation of nature.

Let our friend go down the hill, and, turning off close to Blackheath, reach Eltham by way of Black Fen. Will he say that a walk of eight miles has been unproductive of great good to him? No; again, let him start from Lower Sydenham Station, and, keeping down the lane to Southend, walk to Bromley through Boyd's Field and on to Chislehurst by way of Scott's Park and Bonner's Field.

This is a walk of about seven miles, from a point very accessible to cockneys. Dozens of other routes, 'within an easy distance,' in Kent, Surrey, Middlesex, and Essex, might be indicated.

Besides relieving our sight and stirring up agreeable emotions in the mind, such excursions improve digestion, and give a general feeling of lightness and buoyancy to the bodily system. How many a fit of bad temper and despondency is cured by a long walk? Many of our evils spring from material causes, and gastronomy after all (whatever high-flown philosophers may say to the contrary) is one of the sciences which has a secret key to a large part of human happiness. There is, as Cudworth expresses it, 'a magical sympathy' between mind and body; and Juvenal was well aware of this fact when he tells us that, if we do presume to dictate to the gods what blessings they should give us, we must not forget to pray for *mens sana in corpore sano*.

How many moral disturbances and crimes has indigestion caused? And how often is an immoral state of mind produced by neglecting to 'bring the body into subjection'? Plato, in his ideal commonwealth, justly lays great stress on the gymnastic element in education. Amongst the Romans, expressions applied to education were borrowed from the gladiatorial school, 'which,' says Dr. Donaldson, 'was the earliest specimen of a distinct training establishment. *Rudimenta* (properly, "the foil exercises") and *elementa* (properly, "training food") became synonymous expressions for early education, just as *eruditus* ("out of foils") became the term for a completely learned man.' The Greek and Roman training possibly tended too much to make men 'prize animals,' and doubtless walking was too recognised part of ancient (any more than it is of modern) gymnastics.

A sportsman gets valuable exercise; but all men are not and cannot be sportsmen. We have the vigorous and healthy games of cricket, football, rackets, fives, &c.; but the majority of men do not and cannot qualify for these pursuits, which require skill and practice. Rowing is fine exercise; but one cannot always be near a river broad and deep enough for boating.

Gymnastics (in the ordinary acceptance of the word) are in the highest degree useful: they strengthen and develop the body, but give no direct relief to the mind.

Perhaps the best of all exercises is riding; but proficiency in horsemanship is by no means general, and implies experience and money. When the representatives of the Corporation of the City of London decided to ride on horseback in the procession on the Thanksgiving Day for the recovery of the Prince of Wales, was not the question asked by a member of the Corporation, 'Have any measures been taken to secure our representatives' safety on horseback?' Walking tours can be indulged in without demands on skill, and, even by a



Londoner, with little necessary expense. Demands on endurance are lessened the more the limbs, within due limits, are exercised and the motives of duty or benefit to ourselves gradually develop into those of pleasure, until our walks are no longer constitutions 'grinds,' but enjoyable recreations.

Several two- or three-day trips might be suggested. Those who have more time to spare for walking tours will have no difficulty in selecting their routes. Many prefer to display their pedestrian powers on foreign land. Perhaps it is well to do the Continent when we can; and we shall enjoy England more and more as we get older and feel less inclined to leave our 'own, own native land.' Companionship is often desirable in our outings; but if one journeys through a beautiful country on a fine day, one ought not to quarrel with solitude. A man constantly in contact with his fellow men not only needs a change of scene, but also quietude and retirement—rather rare luxuries for a busy man. Moreover, the beauties of nature are most appreciated by a man who is alone and undisturbed.

'Good books are good friends,' says the German proverb, and, we may add, good society out of doors in certain seasons. Sir Henry Holland, in his charming *Recollections of Past Life*, mentions that he always takes a select few of these friends with him on his tours. Truly such companions *delectant domi, non impediunt foris: nobiscum peregrinantur, rusticantur*.

It is fashionable to raise many complaints against the rising generation. The *Saturday Review* thinks that if the objectionable habits and conduct of the modern youth develop and externalise themselves much more, the advent of a second Herod is 'a consummation devoutly to be wished.' The hero of *Sartor Resartus* observed long ago, that all young men ought to be put under barrels from the age of nineteen to twenty-four, when they might reappear sadder and wiser men. One feature of the 'coming race' is the aversion to walk a short distance when one can afford to 'cab' it. Then there is luxury and effeminacy in travelling, which the author of *Tom Brown's School-days* deploras. In fine weather, at all events, much money is wasted on first-class tickets and frequent 'nipping.'

We will conclude by asking Londoners to devote some of their spare time this year to exploring the country round London. Their labour will be well repaid; for where in England are two more beautiful counties than Kent and Surrey? Only one who is acquainted with town and country is justified in estimating the truth of the old saying: 'God made the country, man made the town.'

J. N. WILLAN, M.A.

## FROM SHOREDITCH TO SCHÖNBRUNN

Following short notes of a vacation trip to Vienna and the adjacent country, made by the writer in the summer of 1871, may be of some little service to intending excursionists to the Exhibition now open there, and is written with that intention.

About the end of July 1871 the writer and a friend left the Shoreditch station of the Great Eastern Railway by a special train for Harwich, at eight o'clock P.M., arriving at Harwich at a little after nine o'clock. One of the excellent steamers of the company was in readiness to start on the arrival of the train, and in about ten minutes we were steaming away for Rotterdam. We now ascertained that it would have been more prudent to have gone down to Harwich by an earlier train, even though it involved a delay there of a few minutes, as those who had taken that precaution were enabled to settle themselves, while the later comers had to put up with what accommodation they could get in the saloon. We arrived at the quay at Rotterdam about eleven o'clock A.M. the next morning, after a smooth passage, and at once (being encumbered with only a small valise which we carried in our hands) proceeded to the railway station, which is right opposite the landing-place of the steamer. A few hours of a couple of hours in the departure of our train was well spent in taking a passing glance at this handsome city, and in taking advantage of the substantial refreshments supplied at the railway saloon; and at two o'clock P.M. we set out for Cologne, *viâ* Utrecht and Amsterdam, having adopted this route in preference to that by Antwerp, Brussels, and Verviers. The change, however, except as a variety to those who have already travelled by the latter route, is not to be recommended, the scenery by Emmerich being very flat and uninteresting.

Our first novelty was the train crossing the Rhine on a trestle-bridge, which gave the extraordinary sensation as if the train were jumping a fence, when leaving the strong springs by which it is supported on the raft. A sail of ten minutes took us to the opposite bank, where a powerful engine backed down to us, and whirled us on to *terra firma* once more.

We arrived about eight o'clock that evening at Cologne, where we remained for the night. At seven o'clock the next morning we were in Brussels once more in that glorious cathedral, to whose description no words can do justice, and which now, after a period of eight centuries, is beginning to show signs of completion. At half-past eight a most pleasing sight met our eyes; the children of



the public schools were hearing mass before going to their several schools. To the number of about three hundred, and in age between four and nine years, with their slates hung over their shoulders, and each with a small prayer-book in hand—the girls at one side of the principal aisle of the church, and the boys at the other—they sang in perfect time and tune (accompanied by the organ) the beautiful hymns of the service. After a short lecture from the clergyman, they left the cathedral, the boys going out by one door and the girls by another.

We found that by taking the rail to Bonn we would catch the Rhine steamer, which left Cologne an hour previously, and accordingly left at nine o'clock A.M. This train carries only first-class passengers, which it is as well to note. At Bonn we embarked on board one of the new American steamers, with its three decks, its gorgeous saloons, and its epicurean feasting; and after five or six hours' steaming through the enchanting scenery of this noble river, we landed at Bingen, taking the rail again there for Mayence, thus avoiding the monotony of the sail from Bingen to that city. We slept, or rather did not sleep, here that night. Having unfortunately stayed at a hotel which was near the terminus, we were kept awake by the continuous shrieking of the engines. Early the next morning we proceeded on our way, going by rail to Darmstadt, Aschaffenburg, and thence to Würzburg, where we arrived about ten o'clock P.M. The scenery between Aschaffenburg and Würzburg is very beautiful, consisting of undulating hills of the brightest verdure, picturesquely planted with different kinds of firs, the silvery Main in its many windings (along the banks of which the railway runs for a considerable distance) adding fresh beauty to the scene. On our arrival at the Würzburg station, we found that we had no train going on to Nuremberg until two o'clock next morning, and an opportunity was thus afforded us of having a glance at this handsome though dull city.

The brilliancy of a full moon enabled us to make our way through the principal streets. The perfect silence which reigned at that late hour—the peculiar beauty of the public buildings, churches, and statues under the calm moonlight—the absence of any human being but ourselves—the sudden transition when, on turning a corner, we came on a club-house brilliantly lit from cellar to attic—formed on the whole a picture that we shall never forget.

The railway station at Würzburg is a very important one; and the refreshment saloon, an apartment capable of containing four hundred occupants, is very handsomely furnished in oak covered with green velvet, while the *cuisine* leaves nothing to be desired, and the viands may be washed down by the good Stein wine grown on the neighbouring hills.

After a rather wearisome night journey, we arrived about one

o'clock the next day at that prince of old cities, Nuremberg, where we remained for two days, exploring its beauties and antiquities. The space at my disposal, and the special object with which this paper is written, forbid me to wander into a description of what we saw of interest there; suffice it to say, we visited the churches of St. Sebald, with its celebrated bronze shrine by Peter Vischer; the Church of St. Laurence, with Adam Kraft's equally noted Sacraments Häuslien, or repository for the Host; the Goose Fountain in the market of the same name; another, named the Beautiful Fountain, in the market square; the houses where the painter Albert Dürer and the satirical cobbler Hans Sachs were born—their graves in the churchyard of St. John; the ancient town-hall, with its torture-dungeons; the tower where the 'Iron Virgin' was kept. The victim to be tortured used to be led up to this statue to kiss it, when the arms unfolded and clasped him in an embrace that only ceased with death, the interior of the image being studded with long sharp poignards. Photographs of this benign lady form a staple article of sale here, as the image itself no longer exists. The high red-tiled roofs of the houses, with tiers of windows in them, are very aptly likened to the hull of a ship-of-war. The view from the castle is extremely fine, and well repays a visit. The ancient hotel of the Rothes Ross (Red Horse), where we stayed, is reasonable in its charges, and the accommodation good.

Leaving Nuremberg with reluctance, we proceeded on by rail to Ratisbon, or, as it is invariably called, Regensburg, from the river Regen, which runs into the Danube opposite the city. From the handsome iron bridge which here crosses the Danube we got a distant view of the Valhalla, a temple of great size and magnificence, built by the late King of Bavaria in honour of the heroes and statesmen of Germany, and well worthy of a visit when time is not an object to the traveller. The country thence to Passau is very beautiful, reminding one in many places of the scenery of an English park. Hop-gardens are also very frequent.

Passau, at the confluence of the Inn and the Danube, is most picturesquely situated; and the Inn, with its great volume of water lashed with rocks crowned with images of the saints, seems here larger river than the Danube. To enjoy the beauty of that river properly, we should have left the railway here and pursued the rest of our journey to Vienna by steamboat; we, however, sped on to Linz, where we arrived at nine o'clock that evening, rather tired with our rapid journey. We remained here for the night, and were up early the next morning, in order to have a glance at the city.

Linz contains a population of 30,000, and is strongly fortified. Its chief attraction is its spacious market-place, with its singular Trinity Column in the centre, built in commemoration of the delivery of the city from the Turks and the Plague. The side of the



square adjoining the Danube is built upon; which was a great error, as the prospect would otherwise have been magnificent.

Our steamer was to start for Vienna at eight o'clock in the morning, but we did not leave until near ten o'clock. Whether this impunctuality is usual or not, I cannot say. The boats are very good, and, aided by the rapid flow of the river, perform the down journey to Vienna in about eight hours, and the viands supplied on board are excellent. The return journey from Vienna occupies double the time, ascending against the strong current, and tourists generally avail themselves of the railway instead.

The feeling excited by the first voyage on this beautiful river is hardly describable. Its width in many parts, its rapid flow, the grand forests clothing the noble hills on either bank and reaching to the water's edge, the absence of the small towns and villages one was accustomed to meet on the Rhine at every turn, and the perfect sense of the solitude thus created, form a scene of grandeur not easily effaced. The perils of the whirlpools Strudel and Wirbel were passed, and the small boat, with the image of the Virgin held forth to remind us to give thanks for our passage in safety, shot out, as is customary, from the village of St. Nicholas on the right bank. About half way, near the village of Marbach, on the top of the hill of which stands the pilgrimage of Maria Taferl, the Salzburg and Styrian Alps are in full view, including the grand Dachstein, with their summits covered with eternal snow. The town-like convent of Mlk, spreading widely on the summit of a high hill, forms a most conspicuous sight for many miles. The castles of Aggstein and Drrenstein, said to have been the prisons in which Richard Cur-de-Lion was confined, next attract our attention.

About five o'clock that evening we arrived at Nussdorf, where we disembarked into two small river steamers, which landed us at our destination—the beautiful city of Vienna.

On our arrival at Vienna, our first care was the selection of a hotel, and after a little trouble in this respect we fixed on the Cesterischer Hof, a very handsome, cleanly, and well-conducted establishment; the bedrooms were large, the beds luxurious, and all the rooms supplied with double windows to keep out the noise of the narrow stony streets and the winter colds; the sanitary arrangements were also unexceptionable. We took the precaution, however, to have a perfect understanding with the manager as to his charges—a matter not to be neglected in foreign hotels, and which is looked on as a matter of course by them, and in no wise mean or niggardly. We generally breakfasted at one of the pleasant cafs on the bank of the river, and dined at the restaurant next at hand, our drink being the celebrated beer for which the city is so famous, served up, cold as ice, ruby bright, in crystal jugs with silver tops, containing about a pint each. The artisans usually call for a *krigel* of beer, which is

a white earthenware jug with a metal top, containing about a quart of the same liquor, but charged at only the same price as its more aristocratic compeer.

The old city consists chiefly of long, narrow, roughly-paved streets, with very narrow footpaths; the houses very tall, and, in the case of the dwellings of the higher classes, entered through handsome courtyards; it is also a common thing to find a small arched passage leading apparently through a private dwelling-house from one street to another. Some of the houses also in which the middle classes live are more like barracks than private dwellings, being let in flats, and tenanted in several instances by from two to four hundred persons. Vienna has been likened to a spider's web, the cathedral of St. Stephan, in the Platz of that name, being the centre. The principal streets in the old part of the city are the Gräben (with its Trinity Column), at the end of which is the handsome warehouse of Auguste Klein, with its beautiful articles of virtu and ornamental leather work; the Kohlmarkt, leading up to the Palace; the long Kärnthnerstrasse, with its celebrated Stock-im Eisen, a wooden post formed out of the trunk of the last tree of the Wienerwald, into which the wandering Austrian student drove a nail, until it has become all iron. The new part of the city is laid out in handsome Boulevards, and the side paths planted with trees, as in Paris. Most of the public buildings are situated here, and many princely palaces of the nobility. One of the best views in Vienna is that from the handsome Elizabethan Brück, with its fine statues; the Prater at one side, and the church of St. Charles of Borromeo, with its two tall columns, one at either side of the church, looking extremely like a Turkish mosque, at the other; while in front is the Belvidere Palace, so called from the lovely view from its terrace, and at the back the fine street the Jägerzeile. The Belvidere (upper) Palace contains the imperial picture-gallery, which is considered nearly as fine as that at Dresden. The lower Belvidere contains the celebrated Ambras collection of armour, considered to be the finest in the world. The bridal armour of the Archduke Ferdinand, those of Don John of Austria, of Philip II. of Spain, and one of bright steel inlaid with gold, belonging to the warlike Archbishop of Salzburg, Mathias Lang, are wonders of richness and workmanship. The new opera-house is one of the handsomest in the world, being one mass of solid marble and gold, the principal staircase, steps and all, being pure white marble. Since its completion the foundation of the front of the edifice subsided to the extent of half a foot, which caused its too sensitive architect to blow his brains out, a feat he might have spared himself the trouble of had he a little patience, as the subsidence took place gradually round the entire building, thus ultimately doing no farther harm than reducing the elevation by so much. The interior of the house is most luxuriously furnished, with the seats everywhere covered with crimson vel-



vet, and with plenty of room for each spectator. We heard *Le Domino Noir* and *L'Africaine*, and saw a grand spectacle of *Sardanapa* in five acts (given in dumb show), on our three visits.

The Prater, the Hyde Park of Vienna and the site of the Great Exhibition, consists of an extensive park formed out of a number of islands thrown up by the different branches of the Danube, and covered with fine old trees, under which herds of deer roam about; it is nearly four miles long, and is the great resort of the inhabitants for recreation and amusement. At intervals of about a quarter of a mile in the principal avenue, bands are stationed, which play while you enjoy your *mélange* (milk and coffee) or *swartz* (black coffee), while in a continuous stream pass before you the handsomest equipages. The other principal sights are the cathedral of St. Stephan, with its lofty tower, in which is placed the watch against fire, and the mechanical contrivance for conveying immediate intelligence of the exact spot where a fire has broken out; the Imperial Palace, with its three courts; the Volks-garten (People's Garden), with its temple of Theseus, in which is placed Canova's beautiful statue of 'Theseus killing the Centaur;' the Capuchin church in the Neumarkt, containing the vaults of the royal family, including the young Napoleon, Duke of Reichstadt; the church of the Augustins, with Canova's celebrated monument to the Archduchess Christina; the Votive church, near the arsenal, a magnificent Gothic building, every atom of which seems modelled in lace, built by public subscription to commemorate the escape of the Emperor Francis Joseph from the attempt at his assassination, and now (at the period of our visit) nearly approaching to completion.

The tramways, which largely intersect the city, are of great advantage. The carriages are quite different from ours, being much lighter in construction, with no seats on the roof, which consists of a light awning on an iron frame, the seats inside being light iron imitation cane-work. In one of them we went to see the celebrated summer palace of the Emperor at Schönbrunn, where the German student Stapps attempted the life of the first Napoleon, and, disdaining to beg for mercy, was himself shot a few hours after. Here, too, lived and died Napoleon's son, the Duke of Reichstadt. The Gloriette, a temple with a colonnade of pillars on the highest point of the gardens, forms a conspicuous object for miles around, and would, in the general opinion, have been the spot on which to have built the palace itself. The village of Hietzing, about a half mile distant, is one of the popular places of amusement of the Viennese. Dornbüsch, another rustic place of amusement in the middle of the Wienerwald hills, is also reached by a tramway.

The beauty of the Viennese, their perfection of good-breeding and politeness of manner, make a forcible impression, and form a strong contrast to the roughness of their neighbours. The excel-

lence of Austrian music is well known, and it can be enjoyed in the many gardens set apart for the enjoyment of both music and dancing. The Parisian Mabilles has its prototype here in the Spearl Gardens, situate in a side street off the Jäger-zeile.

Vienna is said to be a dissolute city; yet, with the exception of the gardens above named, we saw nothing to offend the eye whilst we were in it far different from the experience we have had in our own country. The money-changers' offices are situated in the St. Stephan Platz, opposite to the cathedral; and the visitor should change as much of his money as he requires while in Austria for the paper money of the country, as a considerable premium is made by so doing. On leaving Vienna, however, he must get rid of the paper money remaining, as it is only taken at a heavy discount outside the Austrian territory, or indeed I may say out of Vienna itself, as was made known to us at the railway station when leaving, where we were called upon to pay the difference between the paper money and coin when paying for our tickets there.

One of the great charms of a visit to Vienna is the facility with which one can visit the different nationalities within a few hours' railway journey all around him. Prague, the chief town of that mysterious country, Bohemia; Pesth, so loved of the noble Hungarians; Gratz and Ischl, in the almost unknown countries of Styria and Carinthia, &c.

#### THE SALZKAMMERGÜT.

Leaving Vienna with regret, in pursuance of our determination to return by a different route, we proceeded by the railway, returning to Linz, and thence to Lambach. At Lambach we changed into a small railway, which wound slowly up a pretty steep acclivity, most of the way through a young fir forest, and arrived in a short time at Traunfall, the station to stop at in order to see the great Falls of the Traun. We got out here, and a walk of about twenty minutes through the wood brought us to the Falls, which are magnificent; an entire river, as green as the most brilliant emerald, flowing at the rate of ten miles an hour over a rock, with a fall of nearly fifty feet. After enjoying this beautiful scene as long as our limited time allowed, we caught the next train, and proceeded on to the town of Mondsee, with its lovely lake. Here a small steamer, about the size of one of the Thames boats, was in waiting, and we were soon teaming through a regular panorama, with mountains surrounding us on all sides; amongst which, the bold Traunstein, with its crest, said to resemble the profile of Louis the Sixteenth, stands out prominently. An hour's sail brought us to the pretty village of Ebensee, situated at the end of the lake. There being no public conveyance at that hour, we engaged a small one-horse conveyance to Ischl. The carriage contained room for only two persons, the driver (sitting



on the footboard at our feet, with his legs dangling) talking in the funniest manner to his horse to induce him to mend his pace, while the animal would occasionally turn round and look in our faces, as if to ascertain if we were in earnest or no. This after a while proved too much even for his master; and then, after a storm of curses and adjurations by all the saints in the Austrian calendar for disgracing himself and his master before the gentlemen, he finally applied a couple of touches of the whip, which had a magical effect. At about a half mile outside the town we came on a very pretty sight—a small altar, erected in an arched recess at the side of the road, with a priest in full rich robes reciting vespers, the altar being lighted up. The congregation, consisting of about a dozen persons, joining in the responses, kneeling in the centre of the road, formed, in the deepening autumn twilight, a most impressive picture. A drive of about two hours through enchanting scenery brought us to Ischl, the summer residence of the Emperor and of most of the Austrian nobility. We took up our quarters in the Hôtel Bäuer, a perfect palace, built on the Calvarienberg, with a park containing walks, drives, &c. all around it; whilst just outside the grounds is the Viâ Crucis, or Way of the Cross, with each of the stations, in a chapel surrounded with gilt rails; a handsome fresco, representing the subject of each station, being over each altar; the whole occupying about half a mile of the hill, ascending by easy flights of steps, and crowned at the summit by a handsome church with two towers, the windows being of stained glass, and each window containing one of the sentences spoken by our Lord during His agony and crucifixion. All this is in the highest style of art, and nothing tawdry whatever about it.

The palace of the Emperor is exactly opposite, but is quite dwarfed by the magnificent proportions of the hotel. The greater part of the attendants speak English; the proprietary indeed, I believe, is mostly English also, and, as a natural consequence, the tariff is pretty extravagant. On remonstrating with the manager at what we considered the exorbitant charge of 8s. 4d. each per night for beds, the explanation given was, that visitors resorted to Ischl for only about two months of the year, while the hotel staff, &c. had to be kept up the whole year round, as also the expensive style of the accommodation given.

We remained here for a couple of days, making various excursions to the different sight and show places around. The Hohen-zollern waterfall, within a half-hour's walk of the hotel, is well worth visiting; and the view of the Dachstein, with its snowy head and extensive glacier, from one of the numerous summer-houses erected on each prominent eminence, is charming. This has been called the Austrian Switzerland, but with all the grandeur of the Oberland it unites a softness and a calm beauty peculiarly its own; while the

fill the air with perfume, and are radiant with wild flowers of most brilliant hues.

Five or ten miles brought us to Lake Hallstadt, which is one of the handsomest of the many lakes with which this spot is studded; and after partaking of a dish of the trout to the lake at the pretty little hostelry on its edge at Gosau, we proceeded by row-boat to the village of Hallstadt, with its houses perched on the cliff like swallows' nests, the doors of one over the chimney of its neighbour, while no vehicle larger than a narrow cart can pass through the so-called streets. We there procured a guide, who immediately carried us off to see the great Strüßbachfall, which we reached after a fatiguing walk of over three miles.

At every quarter of a mile a gate, kept by a wretchedly diseased cretin, or gibbering idiot, apparently of over eighty or ninety years of age, was opened to let us pass—a shrivelled hand held out for alms, without, however, the slightest attempt at civility. On inquiry we found it was the habit to allow these creatures out of the several asylums to employ themselves thus during the summer months, a practice, however worthy of praise with regard to the recipients of the benefit of it, anything but pleasant to the tourist. We found the waterfall worthy of the trouble we took to reach it; and after a brief rest, and refreshed by a draught of water iced by the cold waters of the cataract, we retraced our steps to the lake, by the way to see the other two great sights of the locality, the Teufelsessel and the Hirschbrunnen; the former an unfathomable chasm under a high mountain, and the latter a large circle of fantastically shaped boulders near the edge of the upper end of the lake, between the interstices of which jets of boiling water spouted: it was quiet, however, at the time of our visit. From this a walk of about five miles would have brought us to the extensive lake of Aussee, but the weather did not permit of it, and we returned by a tiny steamer which regularly lies regularly on the lake during the summer months.

We returned to Ischl, where we remained for the night, and next morning took carriage for St. Wolfgang, situated on the edge of the lake of the same name, which we reached in a couple of hours.

We then visited the cathedral, with its chapel, built on a rock out of the solid rock, uprising in all its original ruggedness above the floor, and its shrine, the object of one of the most celebrated pilgrimages in this country. At the hotel we met a stout burgo-master from the Hague, with his wife and family, nine in number, who immediately engaged a mule for each of the party for the ascent of the chafzberg (the Righi of this country), at an expense of 1*l.* for the mule. A young Brunswick count, with the familiar title of 'Lunchäusen,' who was making a pedestrian tour by himself, desired to join in making the ascent on foot, and we thereupon engaged a guide at an expense of about five shillings to accompany



us. After a fatiguing journey of three hours we arrived at the summit (beating the mule-party by over half an hour), only to find ourselves surrounded by a dense mist, that promised to make our journey in vain. A delay of half an hour, which we usefully employed in refreshing ourselves in the comfortable hotel at the summit, naturally gave time to the mist to disperse, and displayed before our wondering eyes the unrivalled beauty of the Salzkammergüt's numerous azure lakes, surrounded by the glorious Styrian mountains. The height of the mountain is nearly 6000 feet, and well repays the visitor for its ascent.

A rapid descent of an hour and a half, past the palace of Prince of Wrede, brought us to St. Gilgen, a pretty village and railway-station at the head of St. Wolfgang Lake (a rather startling contrast to its namesake St. Giles), where we remained that night. Early the next morning took seats in the diligence for Salzburg, which we reached after a rapid journey of seven hours, passing on our way several beautiful lakes—Fuschl, Mönchsee, Kröttensee, &c. In a sketch like the present, it is impossible to enter into a description of the valuable salt-works, with their hundreds of miles of woodcutting carried along the face of the mountains, from which this city derives its name; nor the artificial dams and contrivances by which the products of its vast forests are made available for commerce. These are all fully set forth in the indispensable 'Murray,' to which we found most exact in every detail of this lovely country. It is said that the 'upper ten' will not sanction a railway to Salzburg in order to preserve its exclusiveness. It is indeed a country well worth a recollection of the beauties of which, called to mind in after years, will bring feelings of pleasure not to be excelled.

D. CONNELL

## STATE TAILORING

'Yes, sir, that's where they make the soldiers' clothes,' says a small boy in answer to my question; and he points through a gateway in which are two blocks of barrack-like buildings. It is the place I am seeking, and is not difficult to find, being in no more remote locality than the Grosvenor-road, Pimlico, on the Embankment of the Thames, nearly opposite the steamboat pier. Armed with a ticket issued by authority—which states that, being a British subject, I may view the Royal Army-Clothing Dépôt within certain prescribed hours in the day—I am allowed to pass the porter, and entering the western building, am consigned to the care of the most courteous of messengers, who proceeds to show me over the establishment in which the State carries on business as its own Tailor to the Forces, *vice* public contracts superseded.

Mounting some flights of stairs in the first place, we emerge upon a gallery surrounding a great central hall; very light and airy, for the roof is of glass, and lofty as the highest part of the building, which elsewhere consists of several floors. Architecturally the interior is plain, but not unimposing, and might be mistaken for part of a Great Exhibition in Hyde Park. There is no crystal fountain, however, nor even one of majolica; nor do strange 'trophies' rear their heads, asserting the union of commerce and art. But looking upon the scene below, the fancy receives a surprise of a different kind. I am surely in some great conservatory; below is an enormous parterre; those masses of red and blue must be flowers—roses of deeper red than ever inspired Lancastrian loyalty; tulips (I must suppose tulips) more 'darkly, deeply, beautifully blue' than even the Red Sea at Suez, and comparable to nothing but the Oxford colours at the University boat-race, as glorified in Oxonian eyes at the moment of success.

The mystification is but momentary. Myself and my guide (philosopher and friend also for the nonce, but merely messenger as a rule) have, I suppose, made some noise in walking on to the gallery; and a lady accompanying us has possibly contributed some pleasant pattering. An unguarded exclamation of surprise on my part at the supposed parterre doubtless assists my disillusionment. At any rate, through one cause or another, I find, on a sudden, thousands of female faces (statistics have since informed me that there were only 500 or thereabouts) raised from the parterre of red and blue—not as you see them peering through flowers in the first parts of pantomimes, but regarding us with a business-like



compound of curiosity and contempt, and, it seems to me, somewhat in the light of intruders. The fact is—and I may as well make a clean breast of it at once—these female faces have nothing to do with flowers: they belong simply to the girls who make the soldiers' coats and trousers; and the effect of the parterre is produced by their Garibaldi jackets—or shirts, if I may so describe them—which they wear principally of red, but considerably of blue colour; neither the style nor the colours, I take it, being dictated by regulation, but inspired, perhaps by convenience, perhaps by caprice, and probably by a service sentiment.

I am looking, in fact, upon the great workroom of the establishment, which I am now informed is 260 feet long, 40 feet wide, and 70 feet high: accommodating over 500 sempstresses, the cubic space for each, counting them at 500 only, being 1200 feet. Arranged in regular order and covering the floor, with the exception of a passage down the centre, are 58 tables, each furnished with sewing-machine. At each table are nine women, eight working with the needle, and the ninth using the machine for such parts of the garments in hand as may be dealt with by that agency. The machines are all driven by steam, so that much trouble is saved to individual operators. The workers are of various ages: some of mature years, others mere girls; all are highly respectable in appearance, and dressed with much neatness in the Garibaldis referred to; the red or the blue colour being always observed, and the red predominating. They wear no hats or bonnets, and I notice that their hair is usually arranged neatly with chignons and other devices of the day, the younger people especially evincing considerable care of these adornments. They work here from 8 in the morning to 6.45 in the evening, with intervals of one hour for dinner and a quarter of an hour for tea—breakfast having been transacted before their arrival. Thus the hours of actual work are nine and a half. These are of course within factory time, and it is said that, however much the department may have been pressed, the hours have never exceeded 60 in the week. The system of payment is by piece-work—that is to say, each person receives in proportion to her earnings—and the arrangements are such as to admit of very satisfactory rewards, compared with the remuneration of the same class of labour out of doors. The price paid for making a tunic is 3s. 4d., and a woman can generally make one a day. For trousers 1s. per pair is given, and some of the people make four pairs a day. That young lady with the blue eyes and yellow chignon is, I understand, engaged upon her third pair, and it is not yet nearly four o'clock. There are women in the factory, it seems, who earn 30s. a week.

But there is much to be seen besides the large workroom. In the factory where I now am, the cloth, &c. is obtained by requisition from the other department, where it is received from the manufac-

turers, and duly examined and tested; the clothing factory accounts for waste of the materials thus furnished. In the use of these materials there may be much waste or perfect economy, according to the degree of care bestowed. Hence, I am told, great attention has been paid to the planning of each article of clothing. Thus, by a judicious adaptation of material to the several parts of a tunic (necessitating a couple of extra seams, which are far from being unornamental), six inches of cloth have been saved in the cutting out of every garment of the kind: that is to say, a tunic is now made from 1 yard 8 inches of cloth instead of 1 yard 14 inches, so that eight tunics are produced from the material which used to be employed for seven tunics.

It is to the cutting department that we now proceed. This is on one of two floors on each side of the large workroom, devoted to cutting and ironing respectively. Each apartment is 260 feet long, 25 feet wide, and 16 feet high. In the cutting room a long table runs through almost its entire length; and the cutting instruments are connected, through the table, with the steam-driven machinery below, which sets them in motion. The process is this. The separate pieces of the garments are chalked out in the ordinary manner; thus, for a tunic the component parts, according to the planned pattern, are traced upon 1 yard 8 inches of cloth. The piece is then laid upon 79 other pieces of the same size, and tied through and through at intervals to preserve their adjustment. The cutter-out then places the edge of the pile of cloth—which holds together as a compact slab—against the cutting instrument, which is an endless ribbon of steel, running through the board, as I have said, and round rollers above and below, all propelled by steam. As a turner deals with the lathe, he accommodates the slab of 80 layers of cloth to the patterns drawn upon it, making the knife follow the lines; and as in this manner the superfluous pieces are removed, the various parts of the garments grow, as it were, into shape. In half a minute you get a lump representing a part of the back multiplied 80 times; in as short a space you have a slab of a sleeve, containing four score of repetitions; and so forth with the breast, skirt, &c. Take up any of these parts, and you will find a solid body, compact as a 'blotting-pad' of paper, the several layers requiring direct means to effect their separation. The cutting is a pretty operation to see: the knife divides the cloth as it would a piece of cheese, and in active motion as it is, seems to pursue the pattern instead of receiving it. The various parts of the garment being thus turned off—in number sufficient for a regimental company of moderate strength—the layers are separated according to the particular regiment for which they are designed; the collars and cuffs, forming the different-coloured facings, are added; also the trimmings, buttons, and everything else required. The materials for each tunic,



buttons, trimming, and all, are then rolled up into separate bundles, and in that state given out to the workwomen, who have nothing to do but to put them together, the thread being also supplied in proper proportions. The other materials employed, including flannel, light stuffs for the East, linings, &c., are all cut by the same process for day shirts, night shirts, and flannel shirts are included in the scope of the factory, and also white trousers. With regard to shirts the soldier has his choice of material, one of flannel being considered equivalent to two of cotton.

The clothing, be it observed, is always provided for particular regiments, according to order. Nothing at all like what Mr. Dicken called the 'dispensation of providence,' which caused all the large postmen to have small coats, and all the small postmen large coats is known in supplying the army. The measures of the men are taken, and the sizes applied for regulated with as much regard to individual requirements as may be, the regimental tailors making any special alterations that may prove necessary. The careful organisation required in the department will be appreciated when I state that, in order to provide for the differences of detail in the uniforms of Cavalry, Artillery, and Infantry—Militia and Yeomanry as well as regulars—it is necessary to keep in store patterns of about 900 different articles. In these respects there have been some simplifications of late years, and the latest is in the matter of buttons. Hitherto every regiment has had its own distinguishing button, at the cost of considerable inconvenience, the necessity of which, however, was never questioned. But at last it has occurred to authority that, after all, there may be no need to keep in store more buttons than are wanted for one regiment, while another regiment is waiting for a sufficient supply—especially considering the confusion caused by this state of things to corps in India or the Colonies. So for the future the service is to have one common button, and the numbers of the different regiments will be indicated in another manner.

We next visit the ironing department, on the other side of the great workroom, as already stated. Ironing is generally understood to be a troublesome occupation, conducive to heat of temper; and tailors' work in this way is especially laborious. The seams of cloth clothing require a great pressure to make them flat, and the management of a 'goose' is a laborious business. Consider, too, the heat of the coke stove, in which the irons must be kept hot. No wonder that tailors are a proverbially irritable tribe—I mean those who do the hard work: the man who takes your measure is always the most suave of mortals, and cringes as if his bill depended upon his willingness to call his soul somebody else's. At Pimlico they take the ironing process very coolly. The implements are all arranged in the room or gallery which we now survey. They are heated by gas-jets, with pipes to carry off the hot air. They are suspended

over the ironing-boards, and are weighted. When a seam is to be pressed, does the lady in the Garibaldi employ her strength in grappling with the instrument? Nothing of the kind. Having arranged the garment on the board, she touches a pedal with her foot, on which the board ascends, the iron descending at the same time to meet it. The entire pressure is thus brought to bear without any farther effort, and all that the operator has to do is to guide the iron with her hand over the smoking seams. The girls we now see at the operation seem as cool as ourselves, and there is nothing in the air of the room in the slightest degree unpleasant.

On the floor above—reached from the bottom by a peculiarly safe lift—are other departments, notably that of the shakos and forage caps. The former are much lighter and lower in the crown than they were, are better looking, and have several incidental improvements. They have a foundation of cork, the neat cutting of which is a marvel equalled only by the accuracy with which they are fixed into form upon blocks. In this work men are employed, though women are about the place engaged in various incidental operations; and the finishing, I suppose, falls to their share.

Descending once more, we have an opportunity of seeing a room full of the red and blue workwomen taking their tea. This refreshment is provided by the establishment, unhappily not gratuitously, though on a very moderate scale of charges. The beverage indeed costs only a penny a cup, containing a pint, and after tasting it we agreed that it was well worth the money. The girls can bring anything they like to eat with it, or they can be supplied with bread-and-butter or cake at a penny a portion. At one time dinners were provided, but this arrangement was found not to answer, owing to the varying nature of the demand; the exigences of home naturally taking many women away when the principal meal of the day becomes due. The meal-room, I should mention, is a sufficiently comfortable place, properly provided with tables and benches. It does not, you may be sure, accommodate the candidates for the cup that cheers, all at once: they go out in batches, fifty or so at a time, as it seemed to me. I have intimated that the patrons of the refreshment get the full worth of their money, and this is the least that can be said; but so well is this little department managed, that while the cost of the tea is 2*l.* a week, the profit, after paying all expenses, amounts to about 40*l.* a year. The firing costs nothing, being supplied by the furnace used for general purposes, and all the expense contributed by Government is 5*s.* a week in aid of the man who makes and serves out the refreshment. The surplus is employed in an excellent manner: it forms a fund from which small sums are advanced, without interest, to the workwomen, who repay the loans by instalments, and have the remarkable characteristic among borrowers of never being in default. I may here mention that in the event of



sickness at home, which is the usual occasion for the grants, the workwomen are allowed to take their materials and make them up under their own roofs. Several are now bringing their bundles back, to be pressed, I suppose, at the establishment.

Mr. Alexander Redgrave, in one of his reports upon the subject, gives a very favourable notice of the Pimlico establishment, and he verifies many of the above particulars. 'It is an establishment, he says, 'the supreme authority of which canvasses every item proposed to be expended; which enters into competition with the customs and confirmed habits; which is open to the sharp criticism of competing manufacturers and of taxpayers, and which has no secrets of management or manufacture. . . . Here is nothing but the primary object of "getting the most for your money." There is no scope for building cottages or making houses comfortable, but everything must show that clothes made in a Government establishment are produced better and cheaper than by public competition, and as all the world, of London at any rate, has heard of the establishment, which the tailoresses employed by military contractors are now at the East-end of London, it will be seen that the superintendent of the Royal Clothing factory at Pimlico has no easy task.' And where he adds: 'One cannot help feeling what an enormous amount of happiness this establishment has promoted in rescuing thousands of women from the miseries and trammels of the contract system under which they have starved for so many years.' Among the instances of the economy of the arrangements, he mentions the collection and sale of the waste pieces of cloth, &c., from which he derived a revenue of 5000*l.* a year; and he cites the testimony of a manufacturer, who, after inspecting the place, expressed his opinion that 'it was a hundred years in advance of any clothing establishment he knew of.'

From the Army Estimates I gather that the annual cost of the personal establishment, including of course the salary of the superintendent, is 11,006*l.*; that the wages paid in the factory amount to 67,855*l.*; that is to say, 7685*l.* for time-work, and 59,532*l.* for piece-work, the remainder being for store and inspection expenses. On the contingencies, rents and taxes, fuel and light, machinery, &c., something more than another 6000*l.* That the most efficient management is rendered for this expenditure it seems impossible to doubt. Mr. Redgrave bears testimony to the attention to details, and Colonel Hudson, the head of the establishment, to whose exertions, I believe, the excellent organisation is to be attributed.

SIDNEY L. BLANCH







## MOUNTAIN MEMORIES

O DENIZENS in London town,  
Who linger, more's the pity,  
Where Wren's great cupola looks down  
On all the toiling city;  
Or you who loiter in the west,  
Where cliques and clubs are busy,  
You who declare that Gladstone's best,  
Or swear by deeds of 'Dizzy';

Come with me to a clearer air,  
Where Alpine heights frown o'er you;  
You'll find no worldly troubles there,  
No debts or duns to bore you.  
Pine-music has a grander tone  
Than London's mighty murmur:  
And air containing more ozone,  
They say, makes flesh grow firmer.

O mountain with the great calm face,  
That now, as in all ages,  
Still gazest on our careworn race,  
What grand historic pages  
Thine eyes have seen, whereon were scroll'd  
The records of past glory,  
High names of heroes who of old  
Were famed in song and story!

The wind that swept thee sometimes brought  
Sad sounds of battle thunder;  
Anon with gentler message fraught,  
It blew from eaves whereunder  
The lover to his lady sigh'd,  
With protest unavailing;  
And then there came for those who died  
The long low sound of wailing.

Proud, pale, and passionless, on high  
Uprise the steadfast mountains;  
They win the secret of the sky,  
And from their feet the fountains  
Spring forth to tell, for miles and miles,  
The message they deliver;  
Until the great sea's countless smiles  
Flash welcome to the river!

H. SAVILE CLARKE.



## THE SUPERVISOR'S STORY

It was at —, in Yorkshire, that I first met with my friend the supervisor. I had the pleasure of an evening's conversation with him, an evening and a morning, as I may say, for we didn't go to bed all that night, and the tots of toddy reached a total that caused Reason to totter on her throne. We were conversing, amongst other topics, upon Fenianism; and I remarked to my friend the supervisor, that I felt a little tender in touching on the theme, for that I didn't exactly know, although I was certain he was a Scotchman, whether he mightn't be an Irishman as well. You'll bear in mind that we'd reached the stage of our 'toddy tournament' which might be termed the *mêlée* (or the mellow, in the vernacular); anyhow, we were getting mixed in our ideas.

And I am not surprised at that same,—said Sandy,—for I lived many years in Ireland, when I was just a gauger, and I grew so intimate with the Irish, that my tongue got a twist that it's never recovered from to this day. And to tell you the truth, it was the pleasantest country to live in of all the islands of Great Britain. Why, a man who was a Crown officer, and had ready-money once a quarter, was aquil to a lord; and there was something in the air of the country that was wholesome to that degree, that ye might be drinking whisky all the day, and be never a penny the worse for it at night. I was in a wildish part of the country, up among the bogs of Tipperary. I was just a raw laddie then, upon my approbation as it were, and I was gey active, ye may be sure, routing about the country hunting for stills and shebeens, 'searching auld wives' barrels,' trying to speer out something that might be a feather in my cap, and bring me speedy promotion. But never a drop of potheen or the whiff of a still I could come across, though they were swarming about me the whiles.

But one day, as I sat on the top of a bit hillock looking over the wild country, and thinking of the braes o' Kirkcubright, I spied a man coming along a wee bit track over the moor, and he was as fou as the laird o' Craigdarroch.

He was a stranger to the parts, too, and didn't know the face of me, and he came rolling and slithering along to where I was sitting.

'God save you, friend!' said I.

'The s-saints purtect you!' said my friend.

'It's the decent drop o' liquor you get up there beyant.'

'Be me soul, it is.'

'And it's a decent gossoon that sells it,' I went on.

'Indeed, he is.'

'Will there be a drop left in the jug up beyant?'

'There's lashings of it.'

'Maybe ye'd like a drop more of that same?'

'Indeed, I would.'

'Then I'll be for treating you, friend;' and I linked my arm with his, and away we went over hill and dale, while we came to a lone hut in a bit hag or dingle, where there was a reek of peat smoke, and a bit of a bumbling noise that was the poor fellows inside singing. Well, my friend gave a sort of countersign that I couldn't see the trick of, and he and I both walked in and sot down on a heap of turfs by the floor, and called for the potheen, and I paid for it, and never a one of them was the wiser. But they hadn't got the still there. I found that out; it was up among the bogs somewhere, and I was hoping they'd let drop something that'd give me a line to where it was, when all of a sudden there dropped in a little man, a grocer from the town, and the shine from the door as it opened upon me lit up my face, and in the surprise of the moment he sang out,

'Lads, ye've got the gauger among ye.'

There was a great kish of turf just behind me, and before I could stir a hand, somebody had clapped it over me like an extinguisher, and what with the dust of the turf, and a wheen few trifles that was among it, and the reek and the stink, I didn't come to my senses for a minute or two; and when I popped my head out of the basket, never a soul was there but the old grandmother snoring away in her old chair by the fire.

But though they saved their still, they couldn't get over the selling of the drink: that was plain enough against them; against Terence Macarthy, that is, who lived in the cabin. He was just the cats-paw of the men that worked the still; but he got all the punishment, more's the pity! Well, I summoned Terence, and got him fined a hundred pounds; and as there was nothing in the world in his hut but the old turf kish as I'd kicked the bottom out of, and his grandmother's chair that had been thatched with a bit oat straw, I took out a body-warrant, as we call it, and made up my mind I'd have to take my friend to Dublin Castle.

Now, Ireland's a different country altogether from this; and after we'd had our sessions, and the magistrates had signed the warrant against poor Terence, we went into the public-house close by—the whole lot of us, magistrates and all—and began to drink whisky like fish.

'Sandy, me boy,' said Mike Hackett—ye remember Mike?—'Sandy, isn't it trembling ye are with apprehension?' He was very particular in his conversation, was Mike. 'Isn't it shaking ye



are, from the crown of your occiput to the very phalanxes of your pedals, at the job you've got in hand to incarcerate Terence Macarthy ?'

'They say 'twas he shot the bailiff,' shouted one.

'Divil a one than he murdered the sheriff's officer,' cried another.

'O, he'll take a detachment of dragoons from Killoo,' called a third.

'Come,' I said at last, getting rather cross the way they was chaffing me; 'come, I'll bet a gallon of potheen with any sportsman in the room that I'll take the boy to Dublin Castle all by myself.'

'Done with you!' cried a dozen voices.

And I was booked for about a hogshead of whisky before I knew where I was. But I wouldn't go back; only when the excitement of the drink was out of me, I felt as if I'd a deal rather have left it undone, for they were a wild lot were the Macarthys, and it was a wild country they lived in.

The weather came on wet, I remember; and it was nearly a week before I could get across from Shillaloo to Terence Macarthy's cabin, which was in the barony of Tullabardine; though where the barony went to, and who was the baron of it, was a matter I never could get to know the bottom of.

It was just the dusk of the evening I got to the top of the hill that looked over Terence's cabin; and a dismal hole it seemed, that same little hag or dingle. There was a bit pool of black bog-water at one end of it, and at the other was Tim's cabin — just a heap of turf, with a hole for the smoke to come out.

'Sandy, my boy,' I said to myself, 'you'll never come out of that hole alive.' And I looked round to see if there wasn't some living creature near me; if it had been only a sheep or a pig, it would have been a comfort, just for companionship. There was a red streak of light in the sky, and just across it, I remember, there was a line of wild geese flying, their long necks stretched out and their wings beating a slow time in the air, and I could just hear the whang of them; and the sea-birds screamed and whistled over my head, though it was too dusky to see them. Eh, mon, my heart was like to sink into my feet with the loneliness and the desolation and the danger I judged I was in.

If it wasn't for being laughed at, I'd have gone back. Well, I dropped down into the hollow, and walked up to the cabin. The door was open; and the thought came to me for the moment that they'd all gone off: and pleased I'd have been for that. But, no; there was a bit fire in the corner, and in the darkness I could just see some people crouching down, and the old grandmother sitting in her chair by the peat fire.

'God save all here!' I said, as I walked in.

'Save ye kindly!' replied a gruff voice from the corner.

And with that I sat down on the old kish that had been filled with turf, and pulled out my pipe and began to smoke. I could distinguish objects now in the gloom. There was just a heap of children in the corner, with an old rag covering them, sleeping just as sweetly, too, as if they'd been wrapped in down; and there was the mother of them with the babe at her breast, and Terence lying doubled up with his head in his bosom; but never another soul in the hut.

'Take a draw of a pipe, mon,' said I; 'and don't be down-hearted.'

I gave him my bag of tobacco, and he found a pipe in the corner, and began to smoke.

'Ye'll no have a wee drap whisky in the house?' I said.

'Devil a drap your hanner's left us,' said the man drily.

'Take a pull at my flask, then,' said I.

And Terence took it and drank. Somehow I felt more comfortable then. I was safe as long as I was inside the cabin.

'I suppose you know what I've come here for, Terence?' I said, after a while.

As though this had been a preconcerted signal, the wife here burst out with loud lamentations; the old grandmother raised a feeble 'wirru, wirru!' rocking herself backward and forward in her chair; the children in the corner, aroused by the noise, began to wail and cry; and the little babe at the breast howled dismally in concert.

'Whisht, whisht!' shouted Terence angrily; 'would ye take all the heart out of me, and bring me to shame before his hanner?'

'O, what will we do, what will we do? O, Terry, Terry, will ye leave the children to starve and the babe that hangs to me breast? O, hone! O, hone!'

'Whist, woman, d'ye hear? Mayhap it isn't so bad as we think. Mayhap his hanner will give us a week or two, while the praties come out of the ground and—'

I shook my head.

'I can't do it, Terence; it's a Queen's job, you know.'

'And if the Queen were spoken to, yer hanner,' said the woman—  
'she's had babes of her own,—she wouldn't take the husband away from me, that wasn't to blame at all, except with being too good-natured with those two black villins—'

'Hold your tongue, Bridget!' shouted Terence, interrupting her.

'There is a way,' I said. 'If Terence will show me the road to the still up among the bogs, he'll be let off his imprisonment, and happen get twenty pounds into the bargain.'

'O, Terence darling, do you hear that? Do you hear what his hanner tells you? Go on to your knees, Terence, and thank his hanner!'



But I saw Terence was not to be shaken; he thrust away from him the clinging arms of his wife.

'Do you know that it's an informer he wants me to be? I'm ready to go,' he said, getting up and coming towards me. 'Come along, yer hanner, afore my heart breaks entirely.'

'All right, Terence; we must walk across to where the Dublin road crosses the tail of the bog. We shall have plenty of time to catch the coach.'

'Is it the coach I'll have to go by? Won't it cost a power of money?'

'Seventeen shillings the fare, two shillings the coachman, a shilling for refreshment; you'll cost the country a pound altogether, Terence.'

'A pound, your hanner! a whole pound! a goolden sovereign to take the likes of me to prison? O, your hanner,' said Terence, his face lighting up all of a sudden, 'if ye'd only give the pound to the mistress, to keep the childer and the babes while I lie in the gaol, I'd run by the side, yer hanner; ye should never take your eyes off me. Ah, I'd bless your hanner all the days of my life, and the childer should learn to pray for you, and the old mother that's almost in the grave shall entreat the Queen of Heaven for your soul.'

I was young and soft-hearted then; I couldn't withstand the sight of so much distress. I gave him the sovereign, which he handed over to his wife. 'Now, Terence,' I said, 'I shall trust to your honour. By ten o'clock to-morrow morning you must be at Dublin Castle gate; if you fail me, I'm ruined by my kindness to you.'

'I'll be there, your hanner, by the holy cross,' said Terence, crossing himself devoutly, to give effect to his words.

I didn't feel comfortable either, but I wouldn't go back from my word; so I made my way across the heath. Terence showed me my route till we came in sight of the Dublin road, a white streak in the darkness, and then he went loping on his way by some inscrutable tracks across the hills.

After I'd waited some time, the coach came up; the front seats were full, and I took my place behind, where there was nobody but an old woman, who was fast asleep, propped up by some boxes. I seated myself beside the old woman, and went to sleep too. The coach stopped at Montmellick to change, and that roused me, and then I heard my own name called.

'McAlister! Saunders McAlister! are you there?'

'Sure enough I am,' I said, jumping up and rubbing my eyes; 'who wants me?'

A man clambered up to the roof of the coach with a dark lantern in his hand, which he flashed full upon me and the old woman—still asleep.

'You've got your prisoner all right then,' said the man.

'What do you know about prisoners?' said I sulkily; 'and what do you mean by routing a fellow about just as he's comfortably settled?'

'O!' says he loftily; 'no *hairs* with me; I'm your new supervisor.'

Now I'd written just a note to our supervisor, old Blathery, a decent old fellow as ever lived: 'Dear Bladder,—I'm going to take a prisoner to Dublin to-night, and as I come back I'll come and see you, and we'll have a gey willie waught for auld lang syne.'

'Yes,' said the man, a tallow-candle-looking kind of chap, with big teeth, that made quite a shine, as you may say. 'Yes, I'm your new supervisor, and I'm astonished that you should make so free with your superior officer as to write such a letter to him as that I got to-night. But I'm glad to see you've got your prisoner all right. I'm going up to Dublin too. I've got a prisoner, and there's nobody else to take him, so I am going myself.'

'Why, where's Blathery?' said I.

'Suspended; sure to be dismissed.'

'And Tomkins and Jones, the officers?'

'Suspended too.'

'Gude save us!' said I; 'and what's that for?'

'I can't tell ye all, but I can tell you this much: they were constantly taking prisoners to Dublin Castle, and getting paid for their coach-fare and expenses, and all the while they'd be driving them up in carts they'd borrow from their friends for nothing; and there was one impident fellow made his prisoner walk, and claimed his fare just the same.'

'And was it for that they suspended 'em?'

'Wasn't it enough—to be defrauding the Revenue? I'm glad to see ye've got your man safe alongside you, for, by Jingo, if I'd caught you at those tricks, I'd have been the dismissal of you.'

Well, I felt my heart go down into my boots. What on earth was I to do? Sure enough the next time the old woman woke, I'd be discovered, and then what would be the end of it! I'd be dismissed in disgrace, and ruin my prospects for life; and then poor Katie Stewart, who was waiting for me up in Kirkcaldy, waiting till I'd get my next rise in my salary—O, whatever would I do? Just catch me doing a work of mercy and charity again! 'O Lord!' I said, breathing a mental prayer, 'let me off this once; I'll never offend any more.'

The supervisor—Chandler his name was, queer enough, seeing he was for all the world, as I've said before, just like a tallow candle—he clambered up with his prisoner to where I was sitting, and took his place just opposite me, at the very back of the coach, you know, with his face to the horses. Just the jerk of starting the



coach woke up the old woman, and she, looking about in wonder for a moment, threw her arms up and began to cry,

'O, sure I'm past the place entirely! O, sure, I'm left behind! O, I'll never find my way back!' and she tried to jump off the coach.

I threw my arms round her and held her down; but the more I held her the more she struggled, till in the end I managed to pinion her arms, and, fairly overpowered, she became quiet at last.

Mr. Chandler was all of a shake.

'W-what's the meaning of that extraordinary scene?' he cried.

'Prisoner trying to escape,' I said.

'Bless me, that was a very courageous resistance on your part. I'll make a note of that,' and Chandler pulled out a big note-book; but between the jerking of the coach and the shaking of his hands he couldn't write a word. However, it wasn't long before we were at Portarlinton, which I was thankful to see. I was tired of hugging my old woman. What I'd do after that, I didn't know. But as luck would have it, the moment the coach stopped, Chandler leaped down.

'I'll get a drop of something hot,' he cried, 'to stop this shivering. Look after the prisoners, McAlister.'

'Mother, ain't you thankful to me I saved your life?' I said to the old woman, unclasping my embrace. She gave me a look and a curse, and stepped off the coach. And then a bright thought came into my brain. 'Come over here,' I said to the prisoner opposite, who had been stolidly looking on, 'you'll be warmer and more comfortable in this corner, and you'll get a bit of sleep, perhaps.'

The man came over, and sat down in the corner the old woman had vacated.

'What's your name?'

'Andrew Macarthy.'

'How much have they give you?' I asked of him.

'Six months.'

'Now, my lad,' I said quickly, 'would you rather take two months' imprisonment as a Crown debtor, living on the best of everything, or your six months on prison fare?'

'Why, I'd take the two, av course.'

'Then you've only got to change your name from Andrew to Terence. Will you do it?'

'That I will, your hanner,' said the man with a grin. I think he divined my purpose.

'Hi! hi! hi! Hallo! hallo! Stop! stop!' I began holloaing and shouting with all my might, and all the passengers and the coachman, and Chandler among the lot, came tumbling out of the inn.

'He's gone!' I cried; 'your prisoner's gone!'

'Why the —— didn't you stop him?'

'How could I hold the two of them?' I roared.

Andrew, entering into the spirit of the scene, began to struggle violently, and I threw my arms about him, and held him down.

'Which way did he go?' roared Chandler.

'Down Montmellick way!'

Away went Chandler, his long legs flying out behind him, his skirts fluttering in the breeze, till he disappeared in the outer darkness. I need hardly say that the sympathy of the public was with the escaping prisoner.

'What should we wait for him for?' said the coachman, clambering up into his seat, and looking over the back of the coach; 'we can't stop the coach for him.'

'Go on!' shouted all the passengers.

My heart began to beat once more as the coach moved slowly on. Not till we had cleared the lights of Portarlinton, not till the shouts of the mob which the news of the escape had collected had died away, did I feel perfectly secure.

It was gray dawn as we reached Dublin, and clattered along its streets to the Castle gate. Just by the gate there stood a solitary figure, a masculine figure, dressed in long tattered frieze coat and battered canbeen; he had a cudgel under his arm, and was leaning in melancholy guise against the weather-worn walls. He brightened up when he saw the coach, came forward, and recognising me, offered to help me in my descent. It was Terence Macarthy.

'I'm ready for you, captain,' he said, with a bright smile.

I was no little embarrassed by my two captives. I had only a warrant for one, for Terence, and the Governor of the Castle would not take the custody of two prisoners upon that warrant; and how could I get rid of Andrew? or if I took in Andrew, how dispose of Terence? O, if Andrew would only run away!

'Rin, man, rin!' I whispered in Andrew's ear, as he descended from the coach.

'Would I abuse your hanner's kindness?' whispered the man in reply.

'Go! get out!' I said, nudging Terence with my elbow.

'Sure, your hanner's got me faster than wid chains of iron wid your hanner's tratement of me.'

There was a little public-house hard by the Castle gate, and to that I led my embarrassing charge.

'Now look here, Terence and Andrew,' I said, after we'd each had a cheekful of whisky. 'Her royal Majesty has taken your case into her gracious consideration, and she's come to the conclusion that the interest of justice will be sufficiently subserved if one of ye goes to prison. Now just choose between yourselves.'



'I'll go,' said Terence.

'I will,' said Andrew.

'The devil save you !' said Terence.

And so they went on with their aggravating language, that I'm not Irishman enough to describe to you, and from words they came to blows ; Terence had his cudgel with him, Andrew broke the leg off a stool ; I crept under the table to be out of the way, but the table was upset among 'em, a heavy oak table, the edge of which hit me on the nose and tapped my claret, as the saying is. The fight lasted a quarter of an hour, at the end of which Andrew was on the floor bleeding profusely.

'I've bated the soul out of him,' said Terence, breathless. 'A dirty little omadhaun like that to be taking the paw of me, and to be going to be staling the very prison away from me. Come along quick, yer hanner.'

When we once more reached the Castle gate, there was a post-chaise standing there ; and in the Governor's office was my friend Mr. Chandler, the wreck of the smart supervisor I had last seen. There were great gaps in his row of shining teeth, his tall hat was knocked into the shape of a pancake ; his neat frock-coat was hanging in tatters at his back.

'O; man !' he groaned, as I came in ; 'how could you leave me in the hands of those barbarians ? See how I've been treated ! Why, I was mobbed in that horrible place ! Why did you suffer that man to drive away and leave me ?'

'How could I help it ?' said I. 'Haven't I had desperate work to keep my own prisoner ? Look at my face ;' it was blood-stained certainly. 'Look at my prisoner ;' his head was a mass of bruises. 'If I hadn't fought to the death, I'd have lost him.'

'And is this the way they generally go on about here ?' said Chandler.

'Pretty much about,' I said.

'Then I'll never return to that horrible place, never. I'll go straight back to Somerset House and tell 'em they must send a prizefighter to take charge of the district. I shall report very favourably of you, McAlister, and your desperate courage.'

So he did, I'm glad to say, and I got my district soon after and a rise in salary, and married Katie Stewart. Terence and I were fast friends from that time, and when the old grandmother died I helped him to emigrate to America, where I hear he's doing very well in the public line ; but I never met with sich another adventure.

## CRITICS AND THEIR PREY

We have lately been assured by a very high authority that the people called 'critics' are, in fact, nothing but unsuccessful authors, who adopt that method of revenging themselves upon their more fortunate brethren of the quill. The caustic acid necessary to the exercise of the critical function is supposed to be generated by exposure to the chilling temperature of failure, just as the vinegar of commerce is produced by subjecting certain poor kinds of wine to the action of atmospheric air. I don't know whether the axiom applies to the realm of politics as well as to the republic of letters; but if so, it may, perhaps, serve to explain how it is that the genius of the great authority in question has developed itself so much more completely in the criticism of politics, commonly called opposition, than in a constructive or ministerial direction.

But two of the most celebrated critics of the last hundred years can scarcely be called unsuccessful authors—Dr. Johnson and Coleridge—seeing that the world listened eagerly to everything they said; and although the great dictator of the eighteenth century and the inspired dreamer of the nineteenth differed *toto caelo* upon almost every imaginable subject, they happen to agree in this, that they both depreciated the poetry of Gray. Happily for the world, it was wise enough to turn a deaf ear to their joint verdict, and to enshrine some of his poems in its heart of hearts, so that almost every line of them has become a household word, and has been woven into the texture of innumerable works of writers who have made their mark since that day. Homer, we are assured, sometimes nods; and Coleridge's proposition to change the very significant name of Miss Dorothea Tearsheet of the Boar's Head Tavern, into the almost unmeaning Tearstreet, no less than Johnson's emendation of Macbeth's tag,

'Time and the hour runs through the longest day,'

into

'Time, on ! the hour runs through the longest day,'

may serve to show us in what extraordinary gambols the leviathans of literature sometimes indulge.

Johnson, it is true, excepts the 'Elegy' from his denunciation, although Coleridge condemns even it. But I think the flower of poetical criticism is the former's remark upon a poem of Gray's which is scarcely less known, and by some people even more ad-



mired, the 'Ode on a distant View of Eton College.' The third stanza of the ode runs thus :

' Say, Father Thames—for thou hast seen  
Full many a sprightly race,  
Disporting on thy margent green,  
The paths of pleasure trace—  
Who foremost now delight to cleave  
With pliant arm thy glassy wave?  
The captive linnet which enthal?  
What idle progeny succeed  
To chase the rolling circle's speed,\*  
Or urge the flying ball ?'

Of which the great Doctor says: 'His supplication to Father Thames to tell him who drives the hoop or tosses the ball is useless and puerile. *Father Thames has no better means of knowing than himself.*'

Was ever such a canon of criticism applied to poetry before? If a poet may not appeal to a river god to tell what passes upon the banks of his stream, I know not what the term 'poetical license' may mean. Imagine some of the rainbow-tinted dreams of Shakespeare's heavenly fancy, especially that one he dreamed on a 'Midsummer Night,' attacked and battered with the prosaic sledge-hammer of the doctor's common-sense! When Jeffery declared that he had 'crushed the "Excursion,"' he no doubt believed this assertion to be true; but the great poem happily survives, and where is the crusher? He also believed, no doubt, that he had crushed Byron in his first flight; even after hearing the first note of that trumpet-blast which was to ring through 'Childe Harold' and the 'Dream:'

' Health to immortal Jeffery! Once, in name,  
England could boast a judge almost the same;  
In soul so like, so merciful, so just,  
That some think Satan has resign'd his trust,  
And given the spirit to the world again,  
To sentence letters, as he sentenced men.'

Wordsworth, however, descended to no such revenge, and his champion, Southey, merely said, 'Crushed the "Excursion"! He might as well try to crush Skiddaw.'

There is a kind of poetry, by the way, of which, perhaps, Cowper is the best example, which is commonly called 'descriptive' poetry.

\* Is the Eton of to-day the Eton of Gray's boyhood? Does Young England trundle its hoop there, and go a-bird-catching nowadays? I can scarcely fancy such a 'chase,' or 'chasse,' consistent with the dignity of an Eton boy. Mr. Curzon, in his charming *Monasteries of the Levant*, declares that the chief cause of distress to his dog Fundook, when attacked by parasites, arose from the fact that he was obliged to scratch himself 'just like a common dog.' I fear that the gilded youth of modern Eton must feel something of the same kind of annoyance on reading Gray's famous ode.

Is it possible that there can really be such a thing as descriptive poetry? Poetry, we are told, before all things, implies the exercise of *imagination*: how, then, can it ever be descriptive? Let us turn to Shakespeare's dictum on the subject:

'Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,  
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend  
More than cool reason ever comprehends.  
The lunatic, the lover, and the poet  
Are of imagination all compact.  
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold—  
The madman. While the lover, all as frantic,  
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt.  
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;  
And, as imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothings  
A local habitation and a name.  
Such tricks hath strong imagination.'

Here it will be seen that the Prince of Poets makes imagination to be the very essence of poetry; and declares that, just as the lunatic and the lover see in fact nothing but the creations of their own 'seething brains,' so the poet's imagination

'bodies forth

The forms of *things unknown*;

and as he creates them, his

'pen

Turns them to shapes;'

he paints them on the paper before him.

Thus a poet, in painting the features of a natural landscape, colours it with the hues of his own imagination, and projects his own subjective feelings upon the objective realities around him. So Wordsworth expresses the action and reaction upon each other between Nature and a poet in his 'Ruth':

'The breezes their own languor lent,  
The stars had feelings, which they sent  
Into those gorgeous bowers.'

And again, in his exquisite 'Three years she grew in sun and shower,' he pictures his Lucy in her childhood, absorbing from inanimate Nature all the graces and virtues which were afterwards to form her unspeakable charm and beauty:

'The floating clouds their state shall lend  
To her, for her the willow bend;  
Nor shall she fail to see,  
Even in the motions of the storm,  
Grace, that shall mould the maiden's form  
By silent sympathy.'



## CRITICS AND THEIR PREY

The stars of midnight shall be dear  
 To her, and she shall lean her ear  
 In many a secret place,  
 Where rivulets dance their wayward round,  
 And beauty, born of murmuring sound,  
 Shall pass into her face.

And vital feelings of delight  
 Shall rear her form to stately height,  
 Her virgin bosom swell.  
 Such thoughts to Lucy I will give,  
 While she and I together live  
 Here in this happy dell.'

Here it will be seen that the poet pictures the maiden, not standing aside and beholding Nature only as a spectator, but as riving her own inspiration from the *genius loci* inhabiting the scene around her.

Coleridge also describes the *transforming* power of the Spirit of Poetry in those beautiful verses :

'Doubtless this could not be but that she turns  
 Matter to spirit by sublimation strange,  
 As fire converts to fire the things it burns,  
 As we our food into our nature change,  
 From their gross matter she abstracts their forms,  
 And draws a kind of quintessence from things  
 Which to their proper nature she transforms,  
 To bear them light on her celestial wings.'

Turning everything, like Ophelia in her dying-swan song, 'to fair and to prettiness.' The poet's eye in looking at a natural landscape should resemble the day's eye, as Shakespeare paints it :

'See how the glorious sun doth play the alchemist,  
 Turning the meagre clodded earth to glistening gold.'

But this is precisely what the descriptive poet never does—

'A primrose by the river's brim  
 A yellow primrose is to him,  
 And it is nothing more.'

I can scarcely recollect in Cowper one *poetical* rendering of a landscape, except that of

'the moonlight sliding softly in  
 Between the sleeping leaves;'

which is a very lovely one, and recalls Lorenzo's

'How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank !'

when he was turned into a poet for the moment by Jessica's beauty and his love, as the most prosaic mortals are by such crises in their fate.

The same tendency may be observed in the sister art of painting, in which some painters of the realistic school aim only at a literal and truthful transcript of the scene before them, whilst others—such as Turner—alter the features of a landscape to suit their own preconceived ideal. Ruskin points out how Turner, in the ‘Harbours of England’ and elsewhere, has heightened the cliffs or lowered them precisely to such an extent as he deemed advisable; his so potent art removing the mountains or creating them at will. There is a story told of some famous painter of Madonnas, I think Leonardo da Vinci, which places the creative art of the poet-painter in a still stronger light. One of his lovely girl-Madonnas had come into the hands of a young noble, who fell madly in love with the beauty it depicted. Making sure that the *eidolon* had sprung from a real living flesh-and-blood original, he forthwith called upon the painter and besought him to introduce him to his model. Leonardo declared that he had employed no model: but upon being pressed he admitted, with some reluctance, that a woman had sat for the picture; and farther, that she would be sitting to him again the next day at a certain hour if his patron would call. Burning with impatience, the youth appeared at the appointed time, and found seated by the painter’s easel, not the lovely girl whose image was ever before his eyes, but—a hideous old woman! At first he fancied that Leonardo had played him some scurvy trick, but the painter solemnly assured him that he used no other model than his housekeeper then before him; and that the beautiful placid face, with peach-blossom skin and violet eyes, even then growing into substance on his canvas, was but the image of that withered toothless crone transfigured by his own creative fancy:

‘A virgin Phoenix from her ashes risen.’

Surely a remarkable corroboration of Shakespeare’s lover, who

‘Sees Helen’s beauty in a brow of Egypt.’

Such tricks hath strong imagination.’

With poetical minds, moreover, there is a disposition to see their own mood at the moment reflected in the landscape before them. Perhaps no better or more beautiful examples of such a disposition can be found than those poems of King David in which the royal singer ascribes to the fields and woods around him the exultant joys of his own heart; when, in a transport of joy and thankfulness, he hears the ‘valleys also laugh and sing;’ pictures the approach of Jehovah by the spontaneous joy of the everlasting hills—‘Why hope ye so, ye high hills?’—or feels the firm-set earth trembling at that glorious voice, ‘the voice of the Lord.’

Not the least sublime part of Isaiah’s prophetic apocalypse is that in which he sees the eternal blessedness of God’s people, and challenges the whole inanimate creation to join him in his song of



rapturous ecstasy: 'Sing, O ye heavens! for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth! break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein! for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel.'

In those wonderful pictures with which M. Doré has illustrated the legend of the Wandering Jew, we see the same reflection of overwhelming feeling from all the natural features of earth and sky and sea. The miserable wanderer, in the expiation of his crime, sees the Cross which he had reviled not only embodied in stone by the roadside of the glen through which he hurries, but flaming in the living gold of the sunset sky to which he lifts his weary eyes. The sea into which he is shipwrecked mirrors it in its waves—nay, the very shadow of his own toil-worn figure, cast upon the earth by the bright sun behind his back, assumes the same dreaded image; while the weeds by the wayside seem hurrying on, like himself, in ceaseless haste; and the gnarled and twisted trees which grow upon the hillside fling abroad their thunder-blasted arms, in a hideous resemblance to the demons which invisibly beset his path.

It is curious to notice how, in all of Shakespeare's plays, the physical features of the landscape and its animal inhabitants take their colour from the key-note of the play and the prevailing mood of the speaker. To the eyes of the love-sick Julia, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, describing to her maid the warmth swelling within her virgin bosom, not only

'All thoughts, all passions, all delights,  
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,  
All are but ministers of Love,  
And feed his sacred flame,'

but even the very streams become river gods, inflamed by all-pervading love, and fret and chafe at any obstacle to their course:

'The more thou damm'st it up, the more it burns.  
The current that with gentle murmur glides,  
Thou know'st, being stopp'd, impatiently doth rage;  
But when his fair course is not hindered,  
He makes sweet music with the enamell'd stones,  
Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge  
He overtaketh in his pilgrimage;'

whilst the water-weeds by the river-side become demure Nymphs, who willingly receive his amorous caresses, and the stones in his bed become transformed by the same great deity into enamell'd jewels. Marlowe, too, makes his Passionate Shepherd hear in purring streams and the songs of birds a preconcerted harmony, as though the one were the accompanists of the other in the great concert of Nature, during the shining of 'that light which never was on earth or sea:'

'By shallow rivers, to whose falls  
Melodious birds sing madrigals.'

renzo, as I have already shown, becomes a poet under the magical influence. In the famous moonlight scene, inspired by the brightness of Jessica's lovely eyes, his thoughts turn heavenwards as his heart expands with gratitude in his happy love; and upwards, he bursts into that glorious apostrophe:

'Look, how the floor of heaven  
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold;  
There's not the smallest orb which thou beholdst  
But in his motion like an angel sings,  
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubim,  
Such harmony is in immortal souls;  
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay  
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.'

Illiant caustic Gratiano in the same play finds a very different one of the sights which he often witnessed from the shores of sea-born Cybele:

'How like a younker, or a prodigal,  
The scarpèd bark puts from her native bay,  
Hugg'd and embracèd by the strumpet wind!  
How like a prodigal doth she return,  
With over-weather'd ribs and ragged sails,  
Lean, rent, and beggar'd by the strumpet wind!'

ends to him, you see, are not 'airs from heaven,' but 'blasts of hell.' The point of view is everything.

*Macbeth*, on the other hand, the key-note struck is very different in its tone, and all the natural features of the landscape assume the same sombre boding colour. The blasted heath is the stage for the drama to be played upon, and the very lights of ornament are to veil their brightness during the tragedy:

'Stars, hide your fires!  
Let not light see my black and deep desires.'

Painted Nature is to sympathise in the deed to be done, and in shadow, if not to abet, the murder:

'The raven himself is hoarse  
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan  
Under my battlements.'

The acute tension of the senses of the two murderers the comings and goings acquire a supernatural importance:

'Hark! peace!  
It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,  
Which giv'st the stern'st good-night.'

Even to those who are innocent of all complicity in the crime, the atmosphere appears to be full of some weird unholy tumult:

'The night has been unruly: where we lay  
Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say,  
Lamentings heard in the air; strange screams of death,  
And prophesying that horrible dirge.'



And, prophesying with accents terrible,  
Of dire combustion, and confused events  
New hatch'd to the woful time. The obscure bird  
Clamour'd the livelong night. Some say the earth  
Was fever'd and did shake.'

Macbeth himself, even when he sees some hope of escape by getting rid of Banquo and Fleance, can discern only this night-side of nature :

' Ere the bat hath flown  
His cloister'd flight ; ere to black Hecate's summons  
The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hum  
Hath rung night's yawning peal.'

All beautiful creatures seem to have departed from his remembrance. The songs of birds and incense of flowers, vernal airs and crystal streams, the peace of sunset and the freshness of the morn, he collects no longer, but can think of nothing but things of evil omen. Even natural sounds become presages of doom. The hooting of the harmless owl is transformed into a 'shriek,' and the humming of the homely beetle into 'night's yawning peal.' The outward world reflects to him only the darkness of his own sin-stained mind. 'He has by guilt torn himself live-asunder from Nature, and is therefore himself in a preternatural state : no wonder, then, that he is inclined to superstition and faith in the unknown—of signs and tokens and superhuman agencies.' The winds which, to the pleasure-loving Gratiano, suggest only the harpies in the Rake's Progress, are to Macbeth the trumpet-tongued angels which will blazon to the world

' The deep damnation of his taking off:  
And pity, like a naked new-born babe  
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim, horsed  
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,  
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye.'

He sees the ministers of Fate closing in upon him on every side with fatal certainty ; one disaster follows another with frightful rapidity ; and at length nothing is left to him but to cut short the span of that life which he had thrown away, and which is to each one of us either a Paradise Lost or a Paradise Regained :

' Out, out, brief candle !  
Life's but a walking shadow ; a poor player  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,  
And then is heard no more. It is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.'

## DEBIT AND CREDIT

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Of the five vowels the most important, commercially speaking, are unquestionably IOU. Those magic letters, inscribed legibly on a stamped slip of paper with a signature annexed, have legal potency to bind the signer in shackles of gold, and to establish a debt, with all its hideous consequences of seisin and distraint, *fi-fa* and *ca-sa*, and the rest of the law's grim jargon. Who owes money, to whom, and how much, are among the most delicate and pressing questions daily brought before our tribunals. The same great principle governs the exchanges of Europe, and indeed of the New World also; so that between debtor and creditor oscillate the scales that are weighted with power, plenty, and content on the one hand, while the opposite balance is heavy with the evils that impecunious flesh is heir to. He who is on the fair-weather, the sunny, credit side of the world's gigantic ledger is *pro tanto* the superior of his luckless brother whose name figures on the wrong side of the account. As a rule, creditor and debtor are master and man. UOI, ungrammatical and business-like as the combination may be, forms in the estimation of each of us a much more agreeable group of letters than those that go to make up the pithy confession, IOU.

It was a crime once, a grave and heinous offence, to owe money. Sacred and profane history combine to teach us that lesson. The Mosaic law had been mild in its treatment of the unfortunate debtor. Did he mortgage his few acres of vineyard, his silvery olives, and green fig-trees, his little patch of wheat, or the field of millet, the inconvenience he might sustain from foreclosure was but a temporary one. The sacred jubilee would soon come round, and then the scrap of sequestered ground must be restored. Was it his cloak that he had pawned to the Mordesai of the *fripier's* shop, close under the carven porch of mighty Barzillel the trader, of Barzillel who had a thousand camels plying between the Holy City and heathen ox-worshipping Egypt, and whose humblest jackal and lion's provider Mordesai, son of Laul, was understood to be—the poor borrower must have his mantle, his heavy Arab haick of striped wool, returned to him before the hot sun of a Syrian day gave place to the frosty chill of a Syrian night; and this because the Lawgiver had been careful, more than a thousand years before, of the health of the needy. But Greeks, under the descendants of Alexander's conquering captains, came into Palestine. And after Greeks came Romans. The civil law, the stern spirit of which was old when Justinian composed his



pandects, was, in its crude immaturity, thrust upon the fanatic, money-getting, perfervid people of Judæa. It fared very ill with the debtor then. Prison, slavery, the sale of wife and children, were, as we learn from Holy Writ, the doom of the defaulter. The great rich men of the warring sects, the stiff sour Pharisees, the cold fashionable Sadducees, cultured Hebrew gentlemen who would have been Grecian philosophers if they had not chanced to be born Jews, were in no danger of arrest; the mere vulgar suffered. It was of no use to allege the ancient ordinances of Moses, for the troubles of the debtor somehow were not of the nature that could rouse an angry mob of fire-eyed enthusiasts to fling away their lives on the spears of the legionaries. Debit and credit were in those days words of terrible significance.

Rome, hard in her dealings with all persons of dependent position, was not very merciful to the debtor. The spirit of classic civilisation was not lenient towards those who could not pay. From the Athenian citizen tugging at the oar of somebody's galley in acquittance of a debt for which the just men of Athens had adjudged the temporary services of one freeman to another, down to the time when Otho's despairing cry for civil war was prompted by the thought that he might as well be destroyed by his enemies in the field as by his creditors in the city, the same harsh reading of the statutes held good. Our Gothic ancestors were from the very first extremely severe against the insolvent. Pay, pay, was the cry of those antique German legislators whom Tacitus belauded as some of our honourable gentlemen applaud the Maori and the Chinaman, and anything in old Germany and older Scandinavia might be atoned for by money. To kill a prince cost a heavy wehrgeld. To make boot for an earl or thegn was an expensive luxury. The murder of a plain freeman was costly, when gauged by the value of gold. Slaves could be killed as cheaply as pigs or oxen nowadays. The burning of a house or barn cost this or that. The same compendious tariff took in every shade and variety of outrage, and a Teutonic police-magistrate of the time would simply have produced his price-list, and drawn up his bill for presentation to the dashing young gentleman who stood at the bar taxed with two or three breaches of the Decalogue.

Those who could not pay, the debtors hopelessly on the debit side of the book, found but scant mercy in Rome, small pity among the hardy tribes pressing on the north-western frontiers of the great, soft, ruinous empire. To sell a Roman citizen as a slave in Rome was of course illegal; nay, so stoutly had the tribunes fought for the popular liberties that, when Augustus wore such modest purple as he ventured to don, the old thumbscrews and dungeons for back-sliding debtors were almost as much out of date as in the England of the nineteenth century. And when Augustus was a deified hero, high in his bright place among the Cæsars and Nero and Commo-

and the wise Antonines and the devouring Vitellius reigned supreme, the emperor of the day was not likely to give the hated aristocracy of Rome fresh means of worrying the plebeian wretches who owed them sesterces. He who was not a Roman citizen was a 'wolshead' and pariah. Let him be sold, with wife and child, his half-finished goods, and his scanty household gear, and let payment be made. But the citizen was safe, nor could he, as in the good old days before the Punic Wars, be forced to sell his sons and daughters by way of settling scores. As for the barbarian, he had his wild Germanic code, by which he who could not pay a fine in coin paid in person, either by servitude, mutilation, or outlawry.

Christendom, during the long uncertain period which we call the Middle Ages, was not very tender to the debtor; but, compared with what had gone before, the mercies of even mediæval Europe were kind. The shivering wretch in the cold shade of necessity was regarded as a brother certainly, but not as one of the most interesting of the large human family. The monastic spirit had a decided affection for beggars, a leaning towards criminals, but only a feeble toleration for the commonplace person who could not pay. He had his sanctuary along with the stabber and the cutpurse, and let who dared cross the minster threshold to lay hand on either fugitive of the three. But the highly-organised commonwealths of Italy, still deeply imbued with the spirit of old Rome, were exceptionally severe towards defaulters. Venice set up the stone of infamy, to which shameful pillar insolvents were to be chained and exposed to the scorn of the vulgar. Genoa invented, in its tangible form of breaking to fragments the wooden bench on which the offender sat, what we call bankruptcy. Shylock, with his whetted knife and scales hungering for a pound of palpitating flesh, would have been odious, doubtless, to an Italian theatrical audience of the sixteenth century, but that was because Shylock was a Jew. Had the inexorable creditor been some Venetian merchant-noble, one of those commercial patricians who had their palaces on the Grand Canal and their warehouses on the lagoons, who took their seats in the council and aspired to the ducal dignity, Venetian spectators would have had but slender sympathies with such a greenhorn as Antonio, but mild censure for the pitiless claimant of the forfeiture.

Quick reckonings, rapid fluctuations in the value of securities, and the very extensive ramifications of nineteenth-century commerce, have combined with the general lenity of our modern manners to teach us indulgence towards the debtor. Indeed, so intricate are the gold and silver threads in the vast financial cobweb, that it is hard to say where a balance should be struck. Quite poor men, with meagre cash-boxes and lean ledgers, may now and then feel a glow of satisfaction as they enter the mighty name of Rothschild on the debit side of the account. Crowds of humble clients club their



little all to buttress up the stately superstructure of some colossal firm that owns a merchant navy of its own. Each commercial fortune of the first class, like some giant tree, has its clinging parasites, the tough ivy, the long-armed creepers, the wild vine, as well as the modest underwood that springs meekly up around the huge-girthed stem. When the shock of some panic has done as much havoc with City reputations as that of an earthquake works among the frail dwellings of a South American city, we learn for the first time the real nature of the connection between some long-renowned house and the queer concerns that topple over in its fall. Then we read aghast the hitherto unpublished history of an epoch in British commerce, and very odd and instructive reading it often is. Crœsus and Co. are in the *Gazette* at last; they whose signature was potent as the sign-manual of a monarch, and whose paper was accepted on every exchange in both hemispheres as cheerfully as the notes of the Bank of England. But the fair umbrageous oak was hollow, for all its brave show of strength; cankered, corroded, a sham. The parasitical plants that lived upon it—the rickety finance companies, the hazy mining associations, the loan banks, and so on—sucked the very sap of its life blood while ornamenting the outside with their luxuriant tendrils. They were meant to be feeders to the main trunk, but it was at its expense that they flourished. Presently Crœsus and Co. became the Grand Lydian Credit Company, and under that name the costly bubble burst.

Credit is, in its more æsthetic meaning, a thing peculiarly delicate, sensitive, and shrinking. So long as no rough handling be allowed to mar its symmetry, it equals Prospero's wand in its wonder-working powers. It does duty for kegs and firkins of coined gold, and for chests brimming over with dull bars of bullion. It beckons, and the superfluity of all nations—Chilian copper, Ohio wheat, Egyptian cotton-bales—come quickly across the seas to be piled in its storehouse. Credit can make the desert bloom, and corn and grass to grow where nothing ever grew but scattered thistles or dusky wreck-weed; can reconquer lands from the strong sea, and can tame the dangerous torrent into an orderly well-behaved river. At the call of this enchanter roads and railways, docks and harbours, are conjured up in the unlikeliest spots. Credit commands, and instantly a legion of busy gnomes may be seen toiling with pick and spade to pierce the flanks of mountains, flinging bridges at a giddy height over gorge and stream, and forcing on through hill and valley the iron threads of communication that link province to province, country to country. But this enviable supremacy is held on a very insecure tenure. Credit, like Cæsar's wife, must not be suspected. Existing on smiles, a frown kills it. If there be a case in which calumny is cruel, it is surely that of a trader whose argosy of fortune keeps the sea, as it often happens, with more sail than ballast. To take

away the good name of such a man is to leave him poor indeed; and he would infinitely prefer to be robbed of his light purse of assets—his seven-and-sixpence in the pound—than be deprived of the lifebuoy that keeps his head above the drowning waters of bankruptcy.

America possesses an amazing capacity for giving and taking credit. A native-born citizen of the great republic, of tolerable abilities and address, not immoderately addicted to liquoring-up, and not known to have been in the penitentiary, must be exceptionally unlucky if he cannot thrive there. With us in the old world it is different. Opportunity in Europe is a slippery customer at best, and many complain that they never had a fair chance of their one clutch at the forelock of the illustrious stranger. But in the United States a decently-educated American finds constant fresh starts in life awaiting him, and has a feline knack of falling on his feet wherever circumstance may toss him, or wherever he may be blown by the keen blasts of misfortune. Where any man is thought fit of any employment—where it is quite possible to have been preacher and overseer of a plantation, postmaster and dock-porter, barkeeper at the Star-spangled Banner house and a leading counsel in the rough-and-ready courts of Western *nisi prius*—a man of average brains will generally make a living. Besides, he can get credit. A West-country 'merchant'—which is the euphuistic phrase for the retail shopkeeper who, in the mushroom towns of Missouri or Minnesota, deals in drapery and sundries—has only to win the good word of his neighbours, and to eschew cards, ardent spirits, and stabbing, to get a cargo of Eastern goods on trust. The 'drummers,' or commercial travellers whom the more speculative storekeepers send annually from Philadelphia and New York to scour the wild West, are always on the look-out for deserving young men with business habits and a poor little shop, newly set up among the shingled roofs and framework mansions of a straggling township, that rejoices under the fine name of Troy or of Palmyra. Prices are high, no doubt, and the prosperity of the place is uncertain; but granted that the nascent village goes on growing in the rapid Transatlantic style, it is easy to live, and possible to grow rich, on the strength of that one eleemosynary consignment of dry goods.

There are, among our American cousins, more dignified and agreeable methods of making much out of nothing than that which entails keeping a store in some backwoods Syracuse or Jeffersonville, with some chance of being 'knifed' by the irrepressible rowdy, and a far greater prospect of falling a victim to swamp-fever. The petroleum discoveries offered to the United Statesman of pushing proclivities a fair field whereon to win the spurs of industrial chivalry. Anybody might discover a 'flowing well.' Land was to be bought for little. It was easy to purchase a few tubs, or to get credit for



them. A handful of loose dollars sufficed to hire two or three workmen and perhaps an oil-pump, and a little skill in 'prospecting,' with sedulous attention to business, did the rest. Unquestionably luck had a large share in allotting the prizes of Petrolia. A rich man might sink his shafts and set up his steam engines, and be obliged to content himself, after all, with a beggarly ten or twelve per cent on the capital invested. A poor man, who had bought his barrels on trust and pinched himself sorely to pay his Irish labourers, might be rewarded for his enterprising efforts by 'striking ile' in the highly-profitable shape of a cluster of flowing wells, and would stand with dazzled eyes watching the dark yellow liquid as it spouted out of the earth in a plenteous fountain, a strongly-scented but welcome shower from Fortune's varied cornucopia. An exciting life it was, during the early rush, to grow rapidly rich in the oleaginous atmosphere of the petroleum diggings; and many an Alnaschar, whose first bucketful of crude oil represented his Oriental prototype's basket of glass, passed, luckier than the ambitious crockery-merchant of Bagdad, into the early enjoyment of the marble-fronted mansion, with mahogany street-door and silver knocker, which forms the domestic Elysium of a member of the upper ten thousand.

It is on the Stock Exchanges of the civilised world, from the Bourse of Paris to the Wall-street mart, that credit takes its simplest form. After all, the tradesman who adorns his plate-glass shop-front with goods for which the manufacturer is to be paid when customers replenish the till, gives his time and his care and pains to the work in hand, and is useful as the connecting link between producer and consumer. But stockjobbing is not ostensibly a laborious process. The very laziest can scrawl his name on a slip of paper or write down a few words of instructions. To bid one's broker sell five hundred Liliputs, and buy, for the account, a thousand Blefuscus, need not be too severe a tax upon the time of the veriest loungeur that ever sauntered away the sunny hours. Much money is yearly made by time bargains, the two essentials of which are, that the stock bought by anticipation should rise during the intervening period, and that the buyer should be trusted by the broker. If Turkish or Austrians go up one and a half, what matters it if the smiling purchaser would have worn a rueful look had the drop been as heavy as the rise was buoyant? The man who buys a commodity now actually more valuable than it was when he bespoke it need by no means be a man of substance. It is with him, in his prosperous hour, a mere question of 'receiving the difference,' and he pockets the extra price of what he never meant or cared to hold for an hour. It was, indeed, a duty which the broker owed to himself to exact from the speculator a certain moderate advance, to cover possible risks. For suppose Turkish or Austrian, or, for the matter of that, French or Russian, stock to have been depreciated in the

mean time, instead of going up a degree or two in the barometer of finance, the bold adventurer might have found it as easy to pay the army estimates as to produce the lawful British money which the foreign coupons and title-deeds represented. And who knows if even the 'difference,' the loss on the time bargain, would have been forthcoming from that lank portmonnaie, so ready to absorb the cheque on a Lombard-street bank? Yes, the broker ought in strict rule to have protected himself, just as the Bond-street tailor would do well to make his dealings with Mr. Dawdle and Ensign Fribble ready-money affairs; but he does not always do so, and for the same reason—he does not like to give offence. Where a man can pay, he is apt to resent being asked to give bail for his solvency: on which account the crop of what are technically called 'stags' in Capel-court, and by the less poetic name of 'lame ducks' in the purlieus of the Royal Exchange, is not likely to fail.

We owe to the ingenuity of the long-discrowned king of railways, Hudson the First, the delicious phrase, now firmly ingrafted on the parent stock of our language, 'cooking the accounts.' Not that our forefathers were wholly ignorant of the culinary art as applied to book-keeping and balance-sheets, but that they had no succinct and weighty name, as we have, for the operation. There were fraudulent returns and false entries before the great principle of paying dividends out of capital was got into sound working order. Things were made pleasant, and hideous commercial sepulchres were whitened, and rough roads seemingly smoothed, before accounts began to be cooked nominally as well as practically. But the old methods were comparatively clumsy. Accounts nowadays are manipulated with delicate care and skill, simmering and stewing in the neatest of porcelain-lined saucepans, over the slowest of fires, not boiling furiously or frizzling fiercely, as was the barbarous mode with bygone speculators. The South-Sea Bubble and the Mississippi Company are the two grand historical instances of inflation and collapse. Whoever wishes to plumb the depths of human credulity, or to gauge the gullibility of mankind, finds the temptation to advert to those two epochs of financial madness all but irresistible. Yet, stupendous as was the folly, and Gargantuan the greed, of those frenzied speculators of every rank, who burnt their fingers in trying to pull the chestnuts of gain out of the hot embers of risk, the wire-puller who set these puppets in motion was comparatively blameless.

Law of Lauriston, who reigned over the Rue Quincampoix and its colony of brokers, the flattered friend of the Regent of France, the lavish scatterer of the gold forced upon him by duchesses and washerwomen, by counts and cobblers, was as little of a rogue as a man so sorely tried in the twin fires of prosperity and adversity could well be. He had pulled, inadvertently, the string of a shower-bath full of gold and silver, and he was all but washed away by the flood



that poured about his puzzled ears. He carried off but a few diamonds from the general crash. He died poor in his Venetian exile, and that is the best epitaph that could have been carved upon the tombstone of a keen financier, but a weak man.

The South-Sea Bubble never attained to the heroic proportions of the tremendous Mississippi Scheme. Very big it was, however, and terrible was the mischief which it wrought in England, ruining many families, and nipping in the bud, as a baleful frost might do, many a promising fortune. But it was prosaically endured. We Britons take our gains and losses sadly, as Froissart is supposed to say that we take our pleasures. Parliament dealt very sternly with the bewildered directors of the South-Sea Company. They were 'sold up' as remorselessly as are the tenants of some hardfaced owner of London house-property when rents are in arrear. Their estates went to the hammer; their chattels were auctioned; their moneys were estreated. Bankrupt ruin swallowed them, like a devouring gulf, body and bones; they, their wives and children, and all that was theirs, were shipwrecked in the foundering of their vaunted plan for enriching everybody out of the mythic treasure-chest of the South-Sea islands. But the poor men themselves—the commercial lepers thrust out by English justice—were of very mixed characters. Beside the inevitable rogue sat the dull well-meaning booby. There was the knave in one directorial chair; but another accommodated the fool pure and simple, and a third contained some bright-eyed enthusiast, who really believed that the South-Sea Company would bring eternal prosperity to England in general and the company in particular.

As the ultimate destiny of sheep and oxen is to be translated into beef and mutton, so some companies appear to have existed for the express purpose of 'winding up.' Probably they have done no good to the outside public or to their shareholders, until the day when the shutters were put up, and the copper scales and scoop were fraught with no more sovereigns, and green rust began to tarnish the dazzling brass plate of the Utopia Banking Association (Limited). But as the pig is never so engrossing an object of interest as on the day when the pork-butcher converts him into spare-ribs and griskins, so the Utopia becomes for the first time interesting when an official assignee is enthroned behind the wire blinds, and when half-a-dozen practised accountants are fluttering the leaves of the morocco-backed ledgers. There are companies that paid but mediocre dividends and that made a poor figure in the money article of the City correspondent, yet which 'cut up' exceedingly well. It is a drawback, of course, to a company when it is registered under the Act as being of limited liability. The creditors cannot squeeze the sponge in so strong a grasp as when every acre, every pound in the funds, every *sixpence* invested anyhow, could be wrung out of the proprietors of

the broken-down concern. But then it is a case of small profits and of rapid returns. The gain is scanty, but so sure. People who put their money into these peddling enterprises are generally what is called, in bank parlours, good and safe. They are genteel widows, rigid spinsters, vicars, Indian veterans, retired tradesmen, who will meet a 'call' as they would meet a threepenny increase of income-tax—grumbling, but with cash in hand.

There are creditors who never wish their debtors to pay in full, and who would feel themselves personally aggrieved if the account were squared. Such are the estimable persons whose dealings in 'truck and tommy' were summarily repressed by Act of Parliament, but who have been ever since endeavouring to introduce a little tommy, and the thin edge of the wedge of truck, among their work-people. A Shetland shopkeeper, with perhaps fifty fisher families bound to buy every scrap of flannel and square inch of calico, every ounce of tea, every pair of boots, or Sunday hat, at his omnivorous store, by no means wishes his two hundred and fifty serfs to take their names off his books by the substitution of ready-money payments for lifelong credit. They belong to him—they, their boats and nets, their fish, their potatoes, the dwarfish oats in the croft, and the woollen stockings that the girls and their grandmothers knit so incessantly during the long winter evenings around the peat-fire. They pay by not clearing scores. A cash settlement would rob the creditor of his whole tribe of profitable drudging slaves. Theirs is pleasantly called a 'running account,' but it runs slowly, tracking them with the unrelenting pace of Nemesis herself from the cradle to the grave.

In Mexico, as in Poland, debt hangs heavily around the necks of men and women from infancy to senectude. A Polish peasant is soon too deep in the books of the Jewish brandy-seller to call his soul, or his scythe, or anything else, his own. He must drink—and indeed he is frequently but too willing to adopt the bibulous method of conciliation—that he may keep in the good graces of a creditor who could pounce at any moment upon the lean cows that draw his wooden plough, and the half-tamed horses which he harnesses to his wicker-work wagon. So he swallows the fiery poison in increasing doses, until, by the time his hair grows grizzled, he may be said to have solved the vexed question whether or no alcohol be food, by subsisting as much on brandy as on bread.

In Mexico, a peon of the pure or mixed Indian blood is never out of debt. His very christening feast, with the priest's fees, the rare treat of roast mutton and tawny wine, the pulque and the sweetmeats, the painted candles, the gunfiring and bellringing and dancing on the green to gipsy music, sits weightily on a lad's shoulders as he stands on the threshold of manly life. His old father—for people who work age fast under the hot sun and in the thin air of



the high table-lands of Anahuac—has never been able to pay the whole bill for that ceremony. The son wishes to marry, and entails another festival, with fresh dues to the Church, and a new merry-making. My very good senor, the owner of the big estate which son and father work, will graciously advance some dollars to young Pedro, if he will but take upon himself the residue of the unsettled claims on old Antonio. The cura of the parish will give the young couple his blessing on trust, and will wait to be paid by instalments. Pedro, a simple patient beast of burden, accepts the proposal with the meekness of his race, mortgages his labour, and henceforth is always toiling, always in arrear, his pittance of wages constantly anticipated, and he himself for life chained to the soil, and only nominally a free man.

Beer and spirituous liquors are in their way more affected by the credit system than is the case with most other articles in general demand. It is, in a pecuniary point of view, a fine thing to be one of the few great English brewers, and a still finer thing, perhaps, to be numbered among the yet fewer distillers. Dr. Samuel Johnson may have a little overshot the mark when he described the ownership of a brewery as the 'potentiality of growing rich beyond the realms of avarice;' but even the bashfulness of brewers and distillers does not forbid them the coy admission that they are in a paying business. There is much money made by what is, virtually, an oligarchical monopoly. Those steaming vats, those huge retorts, represent broad acres, seats in Parliament, a possible baronetcy, and at any rate the command of a volunteer corps and the red and silver of a deputy lieutenant. But the so-called publican, the florid man with a white apron, a moist eye, and a rubicund face, who has taken the Rising Sun, one of four hundred beershops held as fiefs from the mighty brewer who is his landlord, finds but a scanty margin of profit when he comes to retail the beer of his feudal superior. He cannot deal elsewhere. He dare not raise the customary price of what he sells. It would be asking much from frail humanity did he bid Boniface maintain his family and pay his way on the trifle of illegitimate profit. The plain alternative is to 'stretch' the contents of his kilderkins, and he does stretch them, sophisticating at the same time the blood of John Barleycorn with thirst-provoking and rain-bewildering drugs. His neighbour who has a spirit-licence makes similar liberties with the Cream of the Valley, the Mountain Dew, and other innocent-sounding products of the alchemist of gin. Both act under the stimulus of debt, and by illicit means struggle to keep their heads above the black waters of ruin. They are, in fact, mere ultimate links in the formidable chain of debit and credit.

JOHN HARWOOD.

## THE DUMBERDENE

BY L. K. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN

### CHAPTER I. A DREAM.

It is impossible to find in the wide world a more thorough  
in ghosts than I was in the year 18—. An Eton boy,  
and spirits, fearless and active, I was the last person to  
anything approaching to humbug. That is what I should  
in those days, and I say it now to show you how ungenial  
it which was yet destined to produce a goodly crop of  
that said year, 18—, Harry Bandeswyke and I, aged  
eighteen and seventeen, matriculated together at —  
ford. We were great friends and constant companions,  
I, and he were as different in every way as great friends  
could be. He was a big fellow, six feet six without his shoes,  
a temper as silent, lazy. A man to sleep soundly through  
the Night, to yawn and go to sleep again if he chanced to  
the spirits raged around him. I was slight and excit-  
a quick temper, and no lack of words. Yet we were  
s.

Heir to a goodly property in Wales, which, however, he  
seen. It belonged to distant cousins, and, besides a fine  
and many acres of mountain, there was a fine old quarrel  
With a lamentable want of respect for the originators  
the present possessor of that great privilege appeared  
stretch forth the hand of friendship to his heir. In point  
did stretch out that hand at the time my story begins,  
I Harry to spend the vacation at the Dumberdene, for  
the extraordinary name of an extraordinary place. Harry  
d to me; but his answer to that effect producing a cor-  
tion to bring his friend with him, we at once resolved

a long journey in those days, and we arrived late after a  
ve, for the Dumberdene was in the wildest part of —,  
ing the mountains. The evening gloom was deepening as  
into the park, and even then we had another three quar-  
hour's work before us; for, after a short run on level  
began to ascend another interminable mountain zigzag.  
after a short pull more abrupt than any we had yet expe-  
e carriage came to a stop, and I exclaimed with regret  
too dark to see the house. We were mistaken. It was



only too dark because we were already in the house. The carriage rolled forward once more through a short passage cut out of the rock, and we found ourselves in a hall of vast dimensions, lighted by a huge lamp in the centre, and a bonfire of wood at each end. That was our first entrance into the Dumberdene. We both burst out laughing with boyish glee. Ah, could we have foreseen how sadly linked with our future lives was much that was very near us then, but of which we little dreamed!

We were most kindly received by Mr. and Mrs. Bandeswyke, and their only child Gwen. I suppose the name of the latter was Gwendolin, but I never heard her called anything but Gwen. She was tall, fair, and stately. A face calm and self-possessed; grand with the beauty of a pure and truthful spirit portrayed in each feature: a woman to trust in the hour of danger. Her father was, with the exception of Harry, the most silent man I ever met; perpetually brooding over—what? A crime? a mystery? a problem? The mother was commonplace enough; small, dark, active, and energetic; managing everything and everybody, and talking enough for husband, child, and cousin. We were alone. Mrs. Bandeswyke told us with many apologies that the friends who were asked to meet us could not arrive till the following day. She feared we should find it dull. I feared so too, and vehemently asserted the contrary. Gwen was evidently not the young lady to amuse my passing hour. Harry's silence always appeared sufficient unto him. The family retired to rest early, leaving us alone. Mr. Bandeswyke apologised in fewer words than I should have thought possible. He was somewhat of an invalid. He hoped we should make ourselves quite at home.

'Lively work,' said I, as the door closed; 'I mean to go mad Harry; will you?'

'Certainly.'

'It is a queer old place. Fancy rumbling into the ancestral hall in one's carriage. I don't half like it. It is producing a bad effect on my delicate constitution. I feel ghostly all over. I am already suffering from ghost of the heart, ghost in all my limbs—very bad ghost indeed in my head and face, and shall shortly die of delirium ghostums. Harry!'

'Well?'

'How do you feel in the abode of your ancestors?'

No answer. To this I was accustomed, and I rattled on as usual; walking restlessly about the room, peering behind the tall old-fashioned screens, and looking into the quaint cabinets.

Presently I proposed that we should explore the rooms near us.

'No,' said Harry, in a voice which meant no. He would have done it in any other house, but this was to be his own some day.

Then I suggested that we should go out and smoke. It was our last new accomplishment, for those were days when boys did not smoke until they were called young men, and girls did not flirt till they were seventeen. We have changed all that now, and the poor young people are no longer deprived of these privileges for four or five years.

Harry rose, and stalked to the door. We had some difficulty in finding our way out. In fact, we wandered to the butler's room, and had to be set right and to encounter sundry remonstrances from that individual, an old and privileged servant. It was pitch dark when we stood outside the house, but presently the moon passed from behind a cloud, and we stepped forward to have a look at the place. It was an enormous pile of building, very ancient, especially one portion, which, partially in a ruinous state, stretched away so far among trees, foliage, and mountains, that in the pale moonlight we could not discern where it ended. We both uttered an exclamation of astonishment, and I turned to Harry with a low bow, and congratulated him on his heirship to this mass of ghostliness and ruin.

'Don't be an ass,' said Harry, as he moved towards the house, for at this moment the moon was again obscured, and a driving rain set in. We had gone out by a side door, and though we returned by the same, we again lost our way, and found ourselves, after much wandering, once more in the great entrance hall. I knew that our rooms were not far off, and professing an accurate knowledge, I went on first with the light. Harry lingered, and I looked back to see why he did not follow me. He was standing at the entrance of the passage down which I had turned, and was groping about with his right hand, as if struck with sudden blindness.

'What is the matter?' said I. 'Come on, can't you?'

'I can't find the handle of the door,' said he, still fumbling.

'What door?'

'The door you shut.'

'I shut no door. There is no door,' said I, laughing; but it just passed through my mind, though I did not remember it till afterwards, that his voice did sound muffled, as if a door were shut between us. I stepped back into the hall. There was no door; and as we walked back together, I laughed at Harry, and asked him if he did not think he too was suffering from delirium ghostums, or at least a slight attack of ghost in the joints.

It was the wrong passage after all, for it ended in a real door of immense thickness, bolted and barred. Soon after that we found our way and our rooms, and went to bed.

I had a dream. Such a dream. I was wandering about the house again with Harry. Endless passages, dark, gloomy, and damp, crowded with pictures and quaint old furniture; long low



rooms, dimly lighted by deep slits of windows, over which the ivy hung in thick festoons. Presently I stumbled, and fell rather heavily against a projecting fireplace, one side of which started back with a creak, leaving an aperture large enough to admit a man. Through this we crept into a room. It was small and many cornered, crowded with rubbish and pervaded by a faint sickly odour. Blackbeetles and other huge insects raced across the floor as we advanced. The ceiling was covered with flat globular insects, nearly an inch in size, and sending forth a dreary creaking sound. 'What can these be?' said I; and something seemed to answer, 'These are cocoons.' These creatures have nothing to do with my tale. I did not at the time know the meaning of the word, and I merely mention the circumstance as part of my dream, proving that it was a *bonâ-fide* one, characterised as dreams usually are by all that is odd and unconnected.

A mass of something which looked like a woman's dress lay in the window, but covered with the dust of centuries and undistinguishable in the dim light, for the room was low and dark, and the shutters half-closed. As our eyes became accustomed to the gloom, we perceived in one corner a tattered bed; it was very small, but its appearance was indescribably dreary, and we felt such horror that for some moments we recoiled from approaching it. The heavy tapestry curtains were closed all around. Every fold hung straight down, and seemed to breathe mystery. At length we advanced together, and with trembling hands drew them back. On the bed lay the figure of a child in the dress of a century past, the head half-buried beneath one arm, the face turned to the wall. A luxuriant growth of long sad-coloured hair half concealed the body.

Harry and I gazed in wondering incredulity. We dared not touch the cold still form. We dared not look on the young dead face. As we gazed, a faint air stirred the heavy atmosphere, and we distinctly heard a whisper pass by us: 'So has he lain for a hundred years.' My heart was thumping against my side—drops stood on my forehead. I would have fled. Harry stopped me. His face was deadly white, his mouth firmly set as he leant over the body and gently turned the face to view. It was that of a beautiful child—a boy. Beautiful still, with a singular expression of sweetness and patience, in spite of the terrible emaciation, and of a quaint look of old age, which I have since learnt is produced by suffering and starvation. There were no signs of decay, but the flesh, for flesh it was though shrivelled, was of one uniform light-brown colour. As we still gazed with painful fascination, the head still resting on Harry's arm, a long tremulous shiver ran through the whole frame, the eyelids slightly quivered, the limbs attempted a faint stretch, and then falling from Harry's almost paralysed hands, the whole form fell back as before. We fled in uncontrollable horror. Here my

dream became indistinct, and I can recall but two other incidents. We were still wandering about the house, with a feeling of awe and an ardent desire to find our way out, when, pausing for a moment in a dark passage, we both distinctly heard a deep sigh close to us; and as we grasped one another's hands in horror, footsteps approached us—uneven, halting footsteps, with a squeaking sound of iron against iron, as though one walked with an iron frame. Soon after this, we were in a gloomy gallery, in which the pictures hung strangely, not against the wall, but from the ceiling. They were moved slowly and grimly backwards and forwards by the draughts of the old building. One moved, not backwards and forwards, but up and down. It was the picture of a large fair woman, with a hateful face; a cruel wicked face. There was a slight squint in the eyes, and the heavy flaxen hair was brought very forward over the brow, and bunched out on each side. She was dressed in crimson velvet, over which hung long black robes, which swept the ground. In her hand was a lighted candle, which cast a lurid red light on her bare arm and on one half of her face. In my dream I stopped before her, and with a ghastly effort to overcome the scene of terror, boldly asked her:

‘Why do you move like that?’

There was a long shivering whisper, every word as distinct as possible.

‘Because I loved dancing too much in my past, and now they will not let me rest.’

They were mocking tones, and instinctively I knew that it was a lying whisper, and in my heart I hated that woman. Yet I could not leave her, and tauntingly I remarked on the quaintness of her long black robes, and said I should like to have them for a masquerade. I was no way surprised to see her slide down from the ceiling and step out of her frame; but I felt half strangled when, after taking off the black robes, she passed her dead arm round my neck to fasten them upon me. Beautifully formed and white as snow, half that arm was of icy coldness—half burnt like fire. After that all was confusion. Only I know that Harry was no longer with me. I was alone, yet not alone, for every picture was astir. Men, women, and children stepped out of their frames, some turning and hanging them carefully up, others smashing every atom. They walked up and down, wringing their hands and moaning bitterly. The backgrounds were a sore puzzle to me; some remained in the frames, but some still clung to the figures. That was the only thing that surprised me. If a picture disputed the passage with me, I merely replaced him in his frame. If he did it again, I hung him up. Some stood back to let me pass, others turned to follow me. One old man caught his wig in his own frame, and I was in the act of helping him, when I turned into a picture myself, and was hung to the ceiling by the cruel-faced woman.



At this moment I awoke, to find myself in bed, a person and not a picture, but a more uncomfortable person than I ever remember to have been before. Drops of moisture stood on my face, my very hair was wet, my heart beat painfully, and when I tried to get up, I found myself too giddy to stand. It was the very strongest possible proof of the impression that dream had made that I did not at once call out for Harry. I staggered to the table and took a long draught of water, and then staggered back to bed to recover as I could.

## CHAPTER II.

### AN ADVENTURE.

I MANAGED to be in time for breakfast, and to keep out of the way of Harry's remarks until I had somewhat recovered myself; but not one word of my dream did I breathe to him or anybody else. The day was long and dull, to me at least, although it was chiefly spent in walking and riding over the property at some future time to be Harry's.

He was not dull, for Gwen was with us all day; and although it was hardly a case of love at first sight, that good calm face had evidently a growing attraction for him. Mrs. Bandeswyke meant that it should be so, and was officious enough to have spoiled all. Harry, however, seemed scarcely aware of her existence in the fascination of her daughter's presence, and to the same cause I attributed his taking no notice of my unusual silence.

After breakfast we all set forth to look over the house, first going out of doors to gain an idea of the exterior. I had never even imagined such a place. Its size alone made it remarkable, and the massive walls and buttresses, the enormous beams, and narrow loop holes of windows suggested the idea that it had been originally built for defence. It stood on a terrace or table-land of the mountain, which towered thousands of feet above it at the back, and descended precipitately about a hundred yards from the front. Yet few places could be more entirely concealed from view from below, for gigantic arms of rock formed a natural wall of great height on the edge of the precipice, entirely enclosing the castle, which was only approachable from two points. A short artificial tunnel hewn in the rocks at the back, and guarded by a portcullis, admitted the carriage road into the very house, while a natural gap in the rocks in front let in a narrow view of the glorious landscape below, and formed the entrance to a short flight of steps leading directly to a mountain path which rivalled the Wengern Alp for abruptness and beauty. So completely was the castle, in the oldest part, built into the rock, that God's work and man's work were here hardly to be distinguished apart. The difficulty was increased by the partially-ruined state of this portion of the building, and still

more so by one peculiar feature of this magnificent place, viz. the luxuriance of the trees and foliage. Three enormous cedars partially concealed the ruin from almost every point of view, and the mass of foliage which crept down the mountain side entwined itself alike round rock and stone, brick and buttress. The morning light showed us that the hall into which we had driven the night before divided the older building from the more modern part, which alone was inhabited, and I made the farther discovery that our bedrooms were the last occupied rooms on that side, and were consequently adjoining the deserted portion of the castle.

When we had looked and admired long enough, we passed through the great hall to the cloisters, and from thence to a gloomy chapel full of banners and escutcheons of many a generation past. At the end of all the sight-seeing, we found ourselves on the battlements, from which a fabulous number of counties and churches were to be seen. We returned to the house by a trap-door and short steps into a low dark lobby, full of rubbish, boxes piled up, old furniture, injured pictures, &c.

'The lumber-room,' said Mr. Bandeswyke shortly, as he led the way rapidly to the staircase. My attention was attracted by a curious old screen, and I stopped to examine it. Behind it was a door so curious that I called to Harry to come and look at it. It was arched in form, and of immense strength, though very low. Five bands of iron nearly a foot in breadth were nailed across it.

'Surely, sir, this is a curiosity,' said I, turning to Mr. Bandeswyke. He was gone, but Gwen stood beside us. Gwen and Harry and I. Ah, once more were we destined to stand side by side at that door!

'It is,' said she, answering my remark; 'it leads to the old part of the house, which my father considers unsafe, so that it is never entered. I believe this door has sad associations for him. He never likes to hear it talked of.'

At another time I should have teased Gwen with boyish curiosity to tell us more, but the oppression which I could not shake off kept me silent. By five o'clock the day set in for rain. By six, we had one of the most tremendous storms it has ever been my lot to witness. Our ride had been cut short, and we were employing ourselves as best we might in the billiard-room, when the door burst open, and the old butler tottered into the room. There was that in his appearance which made us leave our game and gaze at him with astonishment. His head trembled, his dress and hair were disarranged and wet. Evidently he had been out in the storm.

'Master, the tree's down, and this is the 26th August!' he exclaimed in a choked voice. And Mr. Bandeswyke, the last to see him, turned suddenly in the very act of playing, and promptly responded, 'You old fool!' in a tone of such energy, and a manner so



different from his usual reserve, that Harry and I looked at one another in amazement.

Mr. Bandeswyke and his servant vanished behind the swing-door almost as soon as the two sentences were uttered, and Gwen recalled us to our game with a composure which made us feel that the incident was no business of ours. Mrs. Bandeswyke had less tact, and poured forth excuses for master and man. Gwen quietly stopped her with the remark that Ransley was a very old servant, and so attached to the place that the loss of a single tree was a real trial to him. With a mind prepared to receive strange impressions in this strange place, I however fancied that her carelessness was assumed, and narrowly watching, I perceived that her hand trembled as she tried to steady her mace.

Mr. Bandeswyke appeared no more till the arrival of the other guests, and before that event occurred we had a dreary time of it; for Gwen likewise disappeared, and we were left to the tender mercies of her mother. I escaped after a while, and was in the act of opening the front-door to have a look at the storm, when it was hastily opened from without, and Gwen, covered by a large plaid, but wet from head to foot, stepped quietly into the hall. I uttered an exclamation of astonishment, but without the slightest word of explanation she merely bowed her head and passed on to her room. I had no time to wonder, for at that moment the guests arrived, and I was captured by my host.

The guests were dull, Harry was dull, Mr. Bandeswyke was dull, I was dull. I may as well say it at once: we were all dull, save Gwen, who was just as usual. In spite of that, I was glad when we dispersed for the night, even while I dreaded the night.

'Let's go out and smoke,' I whispered to Harry, as we stood together at the drawing-room door.

Gwen was close to us and heard. She turned back and said, loud enough for her father to hear,

'O, not to-night, do not go out to-night. It is so damp after these storms.'

It was unlike Gwen. I felt annoyed. Old Bandeswyke waxed paternal on the spot.

'My dear boys, don't think of such a thing. You have no idea of our mountain air after a storm. Go to the billiard-room.'

We thanked him, and vanished to our rooms. My curiosity was again roused. Why were father and daughter leagued to prevent us from going out? Of course we went.

'I wonder why they did not want us to go,' said I.

Rheumatism,' said Harry shortly.

Humbug,' responded I, not more lengthily, and then added

'That might do for madam, not for master, or for—'

'Miss Bandeswyke,' interrupted Harry with decision.

Then I knew what was to happen. We had talked of her as when before we came to the Dumberdene.

We walked on in silence till we came to the top of the steps leading down the mountain. Then we turned and smoked in silence. It was again a gusty, fitful night. The wind was sobbing itself to sleep, like an angry child after a fit of passion, occasionally bursting forth with fresh though subdued violence, and then subsiding to a dead calm. The moon, which was at the full, was almost entirely obscured by masses of black clouds, driven wildly over her face. For the moment, as we stood under the rocky wall, the full mild light illumined the scene before us—the old castle, the mountain, the trees. Involuntarily we both started forward, for that moment had revealed to us the largest of the great cedars prostrate on the ground. At its fall a mass of foliage had been torn from the old building, which was now bared to the eye.

'The tree is fallen,' I exclaimed. Again the moonlight passed away, and for a minute the darkness was dense. The old tower clock struck the hour. We counted the strokes; there were thirteen. As the last hoarse clanking sound died away, the scene was once more illuminated. Not by the moon, however. A red light glared suddenly forth inside the ruin, exactly behind where the fallen cedar had stood. The house was on fire! A red light, a dull glowing red. We could see the flames, and we could see figures pass before them. We rushed forward. Lightest and most active, Harry was first at the spot. As I approached, one figure became distinctly visible as it passed and repassed before the fire. Nay, I paused in horror till Harry joined me; for though the flames were confined to one room, they were apparently beyond control, and yet this figure was plainly adding to their fury, and with a long iron rod tapping up fuel and rousing the flame. We were now so close to the house that we could see every line of the man's countenance, and it was an evil one; eyes near together, a large purple scar across his face, coarse straight black hair, a villanous expression, a dirty tattered cap with a red tassel on one side of his head, the left leg somewhat shrunk, and supported by an iron frame, the squeaking of which he heard distinctly as he limped round his diabolical work. Presently he paused, and taking up a small box scattered the contents into the fire. Its character changed in an instant to a vivid green, rendering his countenance ghastly. Apparently the heat was unbearable, for he stepped hastily back. Ha, he stumbles, tries to save himself; in vain! He falls, and falls into the very middle of that furnace, with a shriek which freezes the blood in our veins. Again we rushed forward, and the moon once more lending her light, we entered, grasping and clinging to the ivy, straight up the old wall, and crashing through the window we stood in the burning room.



It was empty—no fire, no man! But as if to mock us, as if to prove that we had not been dreaming, a large space in the centre was lowered and bricked as if to contain a fire; a curious chimney, shaped like an extinguisher, hung over it from the ceiling; ashes and cinders, among which some charred bones were plainly visible, were scattered about, *and an iron frame was lying straight across the quaint fireplace.*

It was a moment never to be forgotten. We looked at one another in silence. Even Harry was moved.

‘Can we have come to the wrong room?’ I whispered.

He shook his head, and pointed to the iron. Then he crossed the room, and tried a door. It was locked, but the lock was old, and we could easily have burst it, if the moonlight had not again left us in pitch darkness. ‘Come away,’ I whispered. I am ashamed to say I was trembling like a girl. My dream had thoroughly unnerved me.

‘I mean to see this out,’ replied Harry. ‘Of course it is a trick. Will you fetch the lantern, or shall I?’

Both appeared equally terrible, to leave him or to be left.

‘You will be quickest. I will wait,’ said he, in a tone which admitted no reply; and I was out of the window and scrambling down the ivy in a second.

As I returned with the lantern, which fortunately we had taken out with us, I again paused in horror, for the flames were again visible, and the man with the iron was once more stirring them up and limping round them. And there, in the midst of this ghastly scene, stood my own Harry, calm, and apparently unconscious of what was passing around him. His tall figure and handsome face were as plainly to be seen as his terrible companion. It was with a sound that was more of a sob than a cry that I dashed on, tearing my hands and my clothes as I almost flew up the ivy and swung myself into the room. Then I turned faint with terror, for again it was empty, excepting that Harry stood waiting as I left him. I think he was surprised at my want of pluck. His nerves had been shaken by no previous warning, and his temperament was not excitable like mine.

We tried in vain to force open that door. Old and slight as the lock appeared, it resisted all our efforts. We paused. And then distinctly we heard a footstep approaching the other side, a halting footstep, a creaking iron. A hand was on the lock. The bolts flew back, and slowly and heavily the door swung open. We hastily raised the lantern, and stepped out into the passage. No one was to be seen. Only a sound as of rats and of falling plaster, and then all was still. Only the wind rose with a dreary moan through the loopholes above us, and passed us with a rush as it wailed down the passage. We went on, through countless rooms and passages, some

wide and vaulted, some narrow and lofty, under deep archways, round massive buttresses, now down a broad oak staircase, now up steep winding steps, till our heads grew giddy. We were astonished to find the oak floors firm, and the walls, though dripping with moisture and covered with damp in places, perfectly solid. The place was safe and perfectly habitable. Why, then, was it deserted? We grew bewildered, and I was oppressed with that strange feeling that all this had happened before. Suddenly my heart stood still with wonder. It *had* all happened before. It was the realisation of my dream. We had turned into the picture-gallery, and there were the pictures as I had seen them, hanging, not against the wall, but from the ceiling, and swinging to and fro; all but one, the stately lady in black robes, and she was moving up and down. I almost expected her to descend and fling her robes around me, as in my dream. It was horrible to know my way as I did now. I fancied Harry looked at me with surprise as I turned with decision to the lobby on the left, and walking straight up to the projecting chimney, touched it, and then stood aside to allow the panel to fall out. It did so, and Harry followed me into a room. *The room.* Was I dreaming still? Harry said 'No' when I asked him. Yet there it all was—the beetles racing, the 'cocoons' creaking, the heap of drapery in the darkened window, the small bed in the corner, and, as we paused, we both became aware of the peculiar sickly odour, as in my dream. And of something more. There was in that room what I can only describe as the consciousness of a presence. The wind had died away in a long lull; not a sound was heard save the hoarse creaking of the 'cocoons' and our own troubled breathing, and yet we both felt that we were not alone. A hot flush mounted to Harry's brow. I know that I was deadly pale. We looked instinctively towards the bed. Our eyes met. We advanced together. Again we paused. Could it be possible that we heard the faintest sound of breathing, not our own? The tattered curtains were closed; through the slits we could see something, yet we could distinguish nothing. Harry put out his hand, and gently drew them back. Yes. There it lay, that still form. The long hair covered it, and the head was turned away, as I had seen it. And as before Harry raised the head and turned the young dead face towards us, and we saw the high-bred delicate features, the old-young look, the strange colouring. And then came the long shivering sigh, the slight tremulous stretching, and the sinking back to the awful repose. And then a shriek, a woman's wail, burst forth so close, so very close, that it seemed in our very ears, and the breath that sent it forth played upon our cheeks. Without waiting for it to die away, as it did with a prolonged wail through the vaulted corridors, we rushed from the room, fled through the passages, stumbled down a staircase, and how, I know not, found ourselves safe in the open air. We



never went to bed that night. We passed it in Harry's room, in wondering discussion of the adventure. Never had I seen Harry so roused. He still leaned strongly to the opinion that some trickery was at work, and with morning light grew ashamed of our panic. He resolved to relate the whole to Mr. Bandeswyke. Firm as was my belief in Harry's wisdom, I could not convince myself that all that we had seen and heard was attributable to natural causes alone.

The next morning we sought and obtained a private interview with our host, and Harry told our tale. Never did man's face cloud over as Mr. Bandeswyke's, when he began to perceive the gist of Harry's remark.

'Then, in spite of my warning, you did go out last night,' was his first observation. After that he listened in silence to the end, and then he said with a smile, for which I hated him, 'When the property is yours, young sir, you will probably fathom the mystery.'

Harry coloured violently, but disdained to reply. I was up in arms at once. 'I hope, sir, you do not for a moment do Harry the gross injustice—'

'I have heard your tale,' interrupted Mr. Bandeswyke, utterly ignoring my existence, and addressing Harry: 'I have heard your tale. Possibly I hold the key to the mystery. Possibly it is a mystery to me. At all events, it is as yet no business of yours, and I must request that your lips will be closed on the subject during my lifetime. You will also answer for your friend's discretion. Do you like to ride to-day?'

I fancy even Harry was nettled at this reply, and at the abrupt transition of subject, and I own that I listened with delight to his rejoinder, which was merely an announcement that we must leave the Dumberdene that day. Not only was he hurt at Mr. Bandeswyke's manner, but in my heart I felt convinced that his repugnance was as great as my own to passing another night in that haunted pile.

Mr. Bandeswyke seemed rather surprised, but received our decision with indifference. An hour later I was amused by his seeking us with regrets at our sudden departure, entreaties that we would stay, and invitations to us to join the family in Italy in the autumn. All this I attributed to Mrs. Bandeswyke, who was evidently much vexed at losing us, and I was almost angry with Harry for his cordial reception of the last proposal. Gwen was very still, very silent. So was Harry all that day, and the next, and for many days to come. He seemed to have grown ten years older in that short visit to his future home.

## CHAPTER III.

## A FALL.

YEARS passed before either of us revisited the Dumberdene. Our friendship suffered no diminution, though our careers were very different. I was ordained, and succeeded to a comfortable family living. Harry married Gwen, as I knew he would. He saw a great deal of her abroad, where the Bandeswykes lived almost entirely after our ill-fated visit. The Dumberdene was shut up. At length, Mr. Bandeswyke being dead and his widow settled in London, Harry and Gwen resolved to return to the old place, with their son, a boy of six or seven. The following note apprised me of their intentions.

'Grosvenor-street, July 18—.

'Dear Charlie,—We are in England again, and mean to live at the Dumberdene. Gwen and I shall be there on the 11th. I ask you to join us as the greatest possible favour. I know your horror of the place, but the mystery must be solved. I need your help as friend and clergyman. I know more than I did. Come. Prepare to rough it, as we bring no servants at first—for reasons. We leave the boy in town.—Yours ever,

HARRY BANDESWYKE.'

'As friend and clergyman.' The first, of course; the second I could not comprehend, unless he wanted me to exorcise the demons, and I smiled to myself at the idea as I journeyed along. Years had weakened the vivid impressions of the time. For Harry was right; it had been a terror to me for long. I had had a severe nervous illness immediately afterwards, and for some time I could not bear to hear the name of the place.

Dear good Harry met me at the last stage; and as we wound up the zigzag to the Castle, he told me all he had heard from Gwen of the mystery, and detailed his plan, which was very simple. Gwen's father was the youngest of seven brothers, who one after another inherited the Dumberdene, and all died childless, or leaving only daughters. Their father had been a remarkable man—most remarkable; for the force of his character was such, that his directions were religiously and minutely observed after his death by every one of his sons, down to the very youngest, although the latter was but ten years old when left an orphan. They had never called him father, nor could any one of them recall a word of kindness from him. He appeared to have struck awe into their very souls; an awe sufficient to render disobedience to his wishes as impossible when he rested in his grave, and they were themselves gray-headed, as in the days when he was named among them as 'the master,' and when, as timid lads, they trembled at the sound of his voice. Before any of them could remember, the entrances to the older part



of the Castle had been closed and barred. They had never been allowed to approach it, inside or out. Year by year the outer walls had crumbled away; year by year the foliage grew and spread over wall and mountain. Not one of the lads had dared to explore that spot.

And when the old man was dying, he called his seven sons to his side, and he made each one swear in turn that, so long as he lived and reigned at the Dumberdene, never should those barred doors be opened, never should human foot enter that part of the Castle. The oath had in each instance been kept. By degrees the building assumed the appearance of a ruin, though such was the solidity of the structure that, as we had seen, it still resisted the effects of neglect. Gwen had heard of the apparition, though she could not tell when it first made its appearance, nor had she heard any story attached to it. She knew, however, that her father had seen it. He had told her this himself, adding that he believed the cedars and dense foliage had alone concealed it from others. He attached particular importance to the middle tree, which had fallen. He had also told her that the apparition came but once a year—on 26th August. 'This,' said Harry, 'accounts for his trying to prevent us from going out that night, as well as for old Ransley's agitation. He was the only other person in the secret.' Farther than this Gwen only knew that her grandfather had no hereditary right to the place. His father was a rich Dutch merchant, whose widow had become the second wife of the master of Dumberdene, the last who rightly bore that title. The first wife had left a little son, who died shortly after his father, and the property then fell into the hands of the second wife, the widow of the Dutchman. She had left it to her only son, Gwen's grandfather. He had affected the title of master, but none of his sons had assumed it. Gwen dimly remembered her great-grandmother, who had long survived her son and most of his children—a wild stern woman, wonderfully active though in extreme old age, with masses of white hair on each side of her face. Gwen had seen her pacing backwards and forwards on the terrace, regardless of wind or weather, muttering fearfully to herself, sometimes stopping suddenly, throwing up her arms above her head, or stamping her stick on the ground. Gwen was in deadly terror of her. This was all. And Harry's plan was to open one of the doors of communication between the old and the newer part of the house, and closely and attentively to examine the whole place. After that he intended to dismantle it, and either to refurnish it, or, more probably, to pull it down, and devote the space to gardens and lawns.

'I am still persuaded that the living have more to do with the mystery than the dead,' said he in conclusion. 'Years back there was probably some story attached to the place; but though my seven

step-uncles were frightened enough to obey their father to the last, his wishes are not binding upon me, nor have they, I strongly suspect, been anything like binding upon the scamps of the neighbourhood. It is a clever trick, but I am resolved to get to the bottom of it.'

And so he did, poor fellow, but not as he intended.

'But why did you want me "as clergyman"?' I asked, returning to the point which had puzzled me in his letter.

His colour rose as of old; he half laughed.

'Well, Charlie, I daresay you will think it great nonsense, and perhaps, after all, I hardly mean it; but the child, you know. If it is a child, he must have Christian burial.'

I was considerably startled. I saw that Harry's incredulity was not as perfect as he tried to believe.

Old Ransley and his wife had been left in charge of the house, and Harry and Gwen had come down quite alone, under pretence of seeing what repairs were required before they collected an establishment. They had only arrived that morning, and when we had had some luncheon, as it was still quite early, Harry proposed that we should begin our task at once.

I approach the end of my tale, the horrible end, and courage almost fails me to continue. In broad daylight on that lovely summer day we once more approached the haunted rooms—Harry, Gwen, old Ransley, and myself. We determined to enter by the upper door, that to which I had called Mr. Bandeswyke's attention on our first visit; it appeared less impregnable than the one leading from the hall. Tools were ready, but it was a long job, though Harry was a very giant in strength. At length the bars were sufficiently bent back to enable us to open the door far enough to admit us one by one. We stood in a wide lobby. Harry and I remembered it full well. He boldly led the way with his wife, who was as calm and composed as if in her own drawing-room; for was not Harry with her? We passed through the picture-gallery, where—still hanging from the ceiling, and swinging backwards and forwards, as they had swung for fourteen years and more—were the pictures we had seen before. There, too, was the one going up and down.

'Only the wind, darling,' whispered Harry, as he drew her arm within his own, and hurried her on.

Why did he whisper? and why draw nearer, as if to guard her from harm? She stopped him, pointing to her of the black robes.

'How curious that this one should go up and down, Harry! I suppose it is the draught. That is my great-grandmother. Papa had a miniature copy of that picture.'

Voice and manner were so entirely as usual, so unmoved, that I felt wonderfully reassured, and Harry glanced at me with a proud smile which spoke volumes.



We went on to *the* room. No footsteps, no creaking iron, no whispers this time. All was still; it was broad daylight. We found the panel out; probably it had never been moved since our hasty exit fourteen years before. We entered. All was as it had been. The room, low pitched and gloomy, was little less awful in the sunshine than at night. There was an indescribable oppression. We approached first the heap of drapery in the window. It was the body of a young woman. No sign of decay; but the same strange shrivelled flesh, the same light-brown hue, that we had seen before.

Gwen was now very pale, and Ransley trembled from head to foot. We turned to the bed, and drew back the curtain. There lay the little child; and when we turned the head towards us, there was the same long shiver as before, but, I thanked heaven, no scream. I could see that Harry dreaded it, by his compressed lips and by his firm hold of the little shoulder. This time the eyes half opened; there was a glimmering light in them; then another long sigh; and it is my firm belief that then, and not till then, the spirit passed away. The body did not fall back into the old position as before. It collapsed, and lay straight as Harry placed it. He called to Ransley in a low voice. The old man was on his knees on the floor.

Harry uttered an exclamation of impatience, and desired me to help him, whispering as he did so, 'I was wrong, Charlie; this is no trick. There is more here than we can understand.' Gently and tenderly he lifted the little child in his arms, Gwen helping him; good brave Gwen, a woman in a thousand. He bore it out of that haunted room, and laid it in the lobby outside. Then he returned for the body of the woman, and placed them side by side.

'You and I must go for the coffin,' said he. 'Gwen will stay with Ransley here.'

'But, Harry, it will take time. Where shall we find one ready made?'

Gwen whispered to me to 'trust to Harry; it was all prepared;' and again I felt that he had never been as sceptical as he tried to believe.

Leaving Gwen standing as a statue guarding the dead, and Ransley crouching near her, his head shaking as with palsy, we ran down to the hall, the great door being easily opened from the inside; a fact which we had before remarked. In the hall we found a large packing-case, out of which Harry drew the boards of a coffin, so contrived as to be easily put together. This done we lifted it, and prepared to return. And then occurred once more that episode of the imaginary door. Although I was first, holding one end of the coffin, while the other was in his grasp, I had not made many steps within the passage before he exclaimed, 'Wait! wait a minute! It will be crushed. There, it is crushed! How could that door shut!'

And while I saw him groping for the handle, as before, his voice grew muffled. It was but for a second, however, and then he called out in his usual manner, 'All right, old fellow; go on;' and we went on to where Gwen patiently awaited us.

The coffin, though only designed for the child, was found big enough to contain both bodies. We raised our awful burden, the unknown dead, and bore it through the hall, out into the cloisters, and on to the chapel. Here, again, the extent and detail of the preparations surprised me. Not only the key of the chapel was at hand, but the key of the family vault was with it; and at a sign from her husband, Gwen placed a prayer-book in my hand, and signed to me to begin the service. I read as one in a dream. Harry, my brave Harry, my old, old friend, stood by me; his arm touched me as I read on. Gwen was at his side, a fair contrast to his firm manly figure. She was somewhat in shadow, but he stood out in bold relief under a flood of ruby light, which fell through a window behind him. There he was, a picture of life and health. Ah, how little could I divine that I was reading that burial service for the living as well as for the long, long dead!

It was over. Harry lingered ere we left the vault. We had work before us, and time lingered not; yet he paused, and with unwonted demonstration of a love too deep for utterance, he passed his arm round his wife's waist and kissed her brow; and as I walked on I heard him whisper, 'My darling, you have been everything to me; be brave to the end.'

Then we returned to the haunted rooms; Harry was in better spirits than at first—the worst was over. The next step was to make a thorough examination and clearance of the room whence the bodies had been removed. 'We may find something more which one would not wish to become the talk of the neighbourhood,' said Harry; 'after this search I will have the whole place pulled down, I am resolved.' We began our work, drawing back curtains and opening the shutters of one window which had been quite closed. As we did so, we perceived a door hitherto unnoticed in the opposite wall. I was the first to see it, and to draw Harry's attention to it. He was the other side of the room, but he instantly advanced towards it. Suddenly he stopped, and once more I saw that groping motion of his hand.

'How very odd! There can't be a door here,' said he.

For the first time Gwen's composure left her. She sprang to his side; she clasped his arm.

'A door, Harry! Not a door—O, say it was not a door!'

She was pale and trembling; he quieted her in a moment. There was nothing to fear, he said; but as she unclasped his arm and turned away, I heard her murmur, 'The first time, the first time!'



O, why did she leave him then, why did she turn away? He stepped forward to the spot I had pointed out.

'Yes,' said he, 'this is plainly the way out.'

What was that noise? What next met our horrified gaze? There was a creaking and crushing of planks giving way; the spot on which he stood failed beneath him. He clutched wildly round with his hands. We sprang forward to save him. We touched him; we almost grasped him. He slipped from our hold. For one moment we looked on his agonised face as, with one cry, he fell—gone from our sight for ever. And the boards rose and fitted into their places with a snap, and all was firm and solid as before.

For one moment I believe I was mad—so sudden and so awful was the shock. I tore wildly at the flooring with my bare hands, and called loudly on his name—called to him to return. It was Gwen who brought me to myself—Gwen, Harry's wife, nay, his widow. She drew me back, her face distorted with horror, yet her senses alert and under command. Her voice was hoarse and grating.

'The room below—the room where you saw the fire; he has only fallen through. Come; be quick!'

She would believe it, she must believe it. She drew me on; it was a ray of hope. We rushed across the lobby and down the stairs. Five minutes before he had been with us on those very steps; where was he now? The room below, all the rooms near, the passages, all were empty. The fatal thickness of those walls, what might they not conceal? We called him—there was no reply; and as we stood and listened, the rich flood of sunshine fell on our white faces, and we heard the joyous song of the birds and the voices of the gardeners outside.

'There must be a hiding-place in those walls,' exclaimed Gwen. 'The tools! fetch the tools! I will go back and stay with him till you come.'

'Stay with him!' Never again, Gwen; never again. It comforted her to say that, and she went back to the room. I fetched not only the tools but the men, and in a few minutes a ghastly secret was laid bare.

'It is hollow, sir,' said the man who dealt the first stroke.

It was hollow. A hole about six feet in circumference descended—ah, how far?

I had to hold Gwen back with all my strength, she leaned in so far, as her voice shrieked down the fathomless abyss,

'Harry! my Harry!'

Shall I ever forget that cry? Did it reach his ear? There was no answer, no sound from below. Then she raised herself up, stretched both her arms before her, and with one cry of despair fell back into a dead faint. Poor thing! it was the best

thing that could happen to her then. We carried her down and gave her over to Mrs. Ransley's care, and as soon as I had sent for a doctor I returned to the room. They were trying to fathom the abyss, and trying in vain. It seemed to descend to the very foundation of the building. Lights had been lowered and extinguished by the foul air. All hope was of course at an end; and when at length the lights burnt steadily, there was that revealed which told of a fate so awful that strong men who stood by turned sick and faint.

The sides of that awful hole were, after a certain space, jagged and uneven. Sharp stones, pieces of iron, hooks, scythes, and knives were let into the wall with such diabolical art, that any one falling must have been fearfully mangled ere he reached the bottom; and sickening marks of such a fall were there. Nothing but the utter demolition of the building would enable us to recover all that remained of him who half-an-hour before stood among us in life and health.

The demolition was ordered. The building was to be razed to the ground. Gwen would have had the work continued night and day; she hoped, hoped madly, long after hope seemed impossible. But men must eat and sleep, even though widows' hearts are wasting and breaking beneath the load of agony. And when days grew into weeks, and little apparent progress was made, then, and not till then, did Gwen consent to leave the place. She went to her mother in London. We hoped that her child would rouse her from her grief and bring her back to life, but it was not so. A strong nature is not always an elastic one; she had received a shock from which she had not power to rally. Her heart was broken. She meekly did what she was told to do, and no more. Never again was she seen voluntarily to open a book, or to take any kind of employment in her hand. She only sat and waited the summons, which came ere many weeks had passed, and then the weary spirit was set free. But I am forestalling my tale.

I cannot tell what we found when at last the work of demolition was completed. Gwen was at rest before that, and as I followed the remains of my best, my only friend from the Castle (for he was taken to his father's home), I called to mind with bitterness our first entrance within those walls destined to be so fatal to us both.

I saw Gwen often during the weary interval before her death. I was the only person who could rouse her even for a moment from her lethargy. When she had ceased to hope, she only once alluded to the past. Some old papers had been found in the picture-gallery so often described, and as they threw light on the mystery of the haunted room, the doctors hoped they might rouse her. For the moment she was roused—not to listen to the tale of black wickedness



unfolded, but to give me one warning, one charge regarding her boy—my ward. She told me that the appearance of an imaginary door was an event of usual occurrence in her family before a death. Her father and all his brothers had seen it, but she added it had been seen three times in each instance, and with intervals of years between. 'I felt little fear, for *he* only saw it once,' said she. It was the only time she spoke of Harry. I did not undeceive her.

She had with rare courage kept the knowledge of this tradition from her husband. She hoped, she said, that it was only a superstition, and would die away if not fostered. She desired that her boy might never hear of it.

The papers were curious. They comprised two or three letters and an old ms. book—journal, account-book, receipt and cookery book all in one, as was the mode of our ancestors. It was the private note-book of her of the black robes—the second wife of the master of Dumberdene. The story was told more by the extraordinary nature of the receipts, and by the entries in the portion devoted to accounts, than by any regular journal. The book seemed to have been commenced before the death of her first husband, for it began with sundry commonplace entries respecting the expenses of his somewhat long illness. Then we have his funeral, and her journey to England with her little son. A short stay in London, where she probably met the master of Dumberdene, for the various items of a trousseau occupy the next few pages; and then follow the usual small expenses of a lady in a country house. All this is interspersed with recipes for soups and puddings, possets, cures for small-pox, and various other matters of the kind. Up to this point I had been obliged to call in assistance to decipher the text, for though the writing was legible enough it was in German and Dutch. But after a year or two passed at the Dumberdene, the lady had apparently become sufficiently at home in the English language to adopt it as her own, and all difficulty on my part was at an end. Her second husband soon appeared to be in failing health, for by degrees it becomes plain that the management is vested in her hands. The payments became more those of the master than of the mistress of the house, and about this time the recipes are of a strange nature. Next to a sleeping draught of a very mild character, we have one containing stronger narcotics, and a note underlined, to the effect that this should on no account be given to children or young people, as it would prove fatal, though not at once. A short extract follows, from some old treatise on poisons, and then one or two recipes for poisoning animals without injury to the skin. Shortly after this comes the funeral expenses of the master of Dumberdene, and a short expression of desolation at this second widowhood, with the additional burden of the young master to bring up with her own son.

The amount of medicine the poor young master swallows after this must have gone far towards relieving her of that burden. Then comes a curious and significant item. So much to a person called Johed Burkdorf for his journey, and that of his niece Santje, from the former home of the widow in Holland. Then an expression of joy at having once again the society of her old tutor and friend. What precise position this Johed held in the household is not clear. Ere long all payments pass through his hands, and if he acts as tutor to the lads, he evidently performs also many services which rather fall to the steward or bailiff. Santje's position is more clearly defined. She is what would now be termed nursery-governess. She waits on the children, and teaches them; and we learn that the young master, the delicate highbred English boy, wins her heart at once, whereas there is deadly feud between her and the fierce young Dutchman. About this time two circumstances of importance are to be noted. First, the family moves into the modern portion of the house, and the older part is deserted, though the lady reserves one room there for herself, and passes much time there in trying experiments with Johed. Secondly, the results of these experiments are noted down. Johed now comes out as a chemist, and the room is a laboratory. It is altered to facilitate their work. *A curious chimney* is built, to enable them to try an experiment which is set down at full length. Certain chemicals are to be thrown into a furnace. Any *animals* shut up in a room above this will be not only rendered insensible, but reduced to powder. If the fire is extinguished too soon, life may be preserved for centuries, though consciousness will never return. In human beings the flesh would wither and *the skin assume a light-brown hue*. This was the theory set forth.

It was impossible not to interpret this diabolical recipe by the light of recent discoveries. But the letters to which I have alluded make the tale of horror yet more clear. They were mere scraps in Dutch and broken English, evidently written by Santje, who, I doubt not, was the young girl over whose mortal remains I had read the burial service on that sad day. She appears to have been shut up in the old part of the castle with her charge, the young master, and I conjecture that these letters, by which she attempted to make known their danger, fell into the hands of Johed and his mistress, for they were all found in the ms. book. They contain short entreaties for help, and in one we have a hasty notice that they are moved to the Dumber room, and, on pretence that the master's illness is an infectious fever, are excluded from all intercourse with others.

'No one comes to us but my cruel uncle,' writes the girl, 'and I dread the squeaking sound of his iron leg along the passage.'

From these documents it was not hard to trace out the tale of



crime and sufferings. Had confirmation been wanting, it was found in the will, which left all to the widow should the young master die under age; and in the coffin found in the family vault with his name and the date outside, inside a carefully-weighed freight of wood and bricks.

If the wretched Johed did actually fall into the furnace which he was piling up for others, who can wonder that his accomplice should lack the courage to enter the room which she had made a grave? Who can wonder that she had the building barred and closed, and that she did her utmost to make this state of things binding upon her son and his descendants? Who can wonder that a curse rested upon the house? Whether she knew of the fearful *oubliette* over which she had placed her husband's son, we shall never know. There is no mention of it in the ms. Its antiquity proves that she neither planned nor completed it, and we may hope that she had never discovered it.

I have never again revisited the Dumberdene. Beautiful grounds now cover the spot where once the haunted rooms rose in their masses of foliage. A fountain now plays over what was once a grave. Harry's boy lives in the more modern castle, which we left standing. He is always asking me to stay with him there. But I cannot face those memories. My trust is that the curse has died out,—dare I say has been expiated?—and that I alone am in possession of a secret so fearful, that there are hours when I could almost doubt if memory has served me rightly.

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## GERMAN REQUISITIONS

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THE clock in the front quad of St. Boniface was on the stroke of one, on a bright day in the summer of 186—. The undergrads had just left the various lecture-rooms of that institution of classical and theological lore, and were standing about in knots chatting the usual commonplaces, arranging plans for their afternoon's amusement, and not yet quite determined who was going to ask who to lunch with him, when a tall gentlemanly-looking young man entered the college gates, and with a diffident air advanced a few paces into the quad. The general cut of his clothes, hat, and face bespoke unmistakably the foreigner. The open guide-book in his hand—an illustration in which he seemed to be comparing with our Elizabethan gables—showed farther that he was doing the lions of Alma Mater. With a polite bow he advanced to the group in which I was standing, and asked, 'Ees dis de kaulege of Boniface?'

We assured him, with a sensation of pride, that indeed this was that renowned college.

'Ah, it ees ver' schön, beautiful, you call. Is it many studenten livers here?'

Now it so happened that in the days of my youth, through the medium of sundry imported *bonnes*, not to say by a residence of two or three years in the land of the Teuton and the Gaul, I had acquired a conversational knowledge of their respective languages, which even a six-year course of the 'anti-furrin' language atmosphere of a public school had failed entirely to eradicate. Therefore it came to pass on this occasion that, desirous no doubt of airing my accomplishments before the companions who maybe had just heard me at lecture murdering in a wholesale manner the *Frogs* of Aristophanes, I answered the stranger's query in my most guttural of German that our learned society consisted of some sixty members.'

A smile of joy came over his rather sad face. 'Ah, güt, you spik Deutsch!' and at once we plunged into a conversation productive of some astonishment in the faces of my friends, not unmingled with that contempt for all 'foreigneering lingo' so usual with the British youth. The majority soon dispersed to inform all who might care to know that 'little Binks' (that's me) 'was jabbering away High Dutch like blazes in the front quad with some foreign fellow.'

The stranger, in the course of our conversation, informed me that he had recently left the University of Heidelberg; that he had been recommended to finish his studies with a course of *philosophie*



at the great English Universities, where he would farther acquire the language of the country. He was now visiting the seat of learning at Oxbridge, proposing to ascertain how best he might carry out these ends. He had called the previous day on a countryman of his, the great Professor Max-Wöeler, for his advice on the subject, but had unfortunately found him from home.

We chatted on for a few minutes, when he presented me with his card, 'Herr Ludwig von Gessler,' and thanking me for my information began making his adieus. Struck by his gentlemanly bearing and agreeable manner, I asked him to lunch with me, and see how we English students fared. With polite hesitation he accepted. Brown, Jones, and Robinson promised to be in my rooms in a few minutes and join the repast.

A very merry luncheon party we made of it, but the lion of the show was undoubtedly our new friend Gessler. A pleasanter or more agreeable companion I never wish to sit down with. Long before we had got to the last course of Reading biscuits and apricot 'squish,' the foreigner was voted a 'capital fellow.' He showed us how to clink glasses in the approved German form. He made a speech in rare and curious English, laudatory of the unquestioned hospitality he, an unknown German student, had received from his brother students at the great University of Oxbridge, and expressed a desire to reciprocate the same should we ever visit him in Vaterland. Accompanying himself on my piano, he trolled forth sundry German lays, incomprehensible to most of us, but loudly applauded by all, doubtless on the principle of *omne ignotum pro magnifico*. Much he admired the handsome old silver flagons, souvenirs of the gentleman-commoner munificence of a bygone age, from which we imbibed our 'audit,' though he confessed a preference for the 'Baierisches Bier' of his native land. With grace he lit a cigar, and by general demand accompanied us for a stroll down to the river. Jones had a 'wine on' that evening. Von Gessler was just the man to make it go off well; would he come to wine with him? Would he dine with him in Hall? 'Ach, danke; you so kind. I not like; eef you vont I veel, danke viel.'

The Herr's tastes and habits at dinner were chiefly notable from a tendency to reverse the order of the carte, to mix meats and sweets on the same plate, and a weakness for using a knife where we benighted barbarians prefer a spoon; but at the wine-party which followed he rapidly ascended the rungs of the ladder of public esteem and before the scouts appeared with the questionable coffee and 'chovy toast dispensed by the Buttery, he was quite the rage. He played and sang, made complimentary little speeches in the mangled broken of English, and won our hearts to a man. 'Old' Gessler (this prefix was soon applied in those days to popular surnames irrespective of age) was voted a 'jolly good fellow;' and, with

open-hearted hospitality which, at that unselfish age, we dispensed, he had enough invitations pressed upon him to last him a week or more.

The evening was wearing on, our host—an excellent pianist—was discoursing sweet music, when some of us observed that ‘old’ Gessler, who was seated in an arm-chair by the fireplace (I can see him now), had buried his face in his hands. Could it be so? Yes; convulsed with sorrow or laughter, tears—‘hot scalding,’ no doubt—were ‘welling’ through his hands.

‘Don’t look at him, poor fellow,’ said a man at my side.

The Herr saw we had noticed his emotion, for a lull had come over the chattering of the party; with a melancholy voice he said:

‘Ach, goot-bye! I go away. I not pain you with my troubles: that *traurige* [sad] moosick, it make me think of—Ach, Himmel! I have one great trouble;’ and again he buried his face in his hands, and groaned with suppressed emotion.

We expressed, in a general kind of way, our condolence with him under the circumstances, whatever they might be; hoped he had not experienced any sudden loss in his family, &c.

‘No, danke. Ach, mein Gott! I have kill mine friend. We fight vot you call vun duel as studenten. I schlag heem vun leetle too hard. He fall. De doctor say heem not live no more. My friends take me quick to de railway station. Dey say I must fly de town von Heidelberg for two year. I scarce bring any clothes away. My friends, dey send me monisch. Ach, my goot friend! I kill him, not meaning. Ach, mein Gott, mein Gott!’ And again he relapsed into an agony of grief in Jones’s arm-chair. A noise expressive of sensation buzzed about the room. ‘I not think to tell you dis my great trouble; but you all so kind and brudderlike, I no help it. I wish still to studieren; so I think, while these two years, to studieren at dees place de philosophie and de English language.’

Somewhat awestruck we were at finding ourselves in the presence of a real live duellist, one who had, moreover, killed his man; however, we consoled with him on the tragic end of his friend (we could do nothing else, especially with the instance of abject contrition before us). Moreover, he explained to us the system on which the German students arranged their little ‘mills;’ how it was quite possible to be drinking beer with a friend one evening, and yet, by the stern laws of university etiquette, have to meet him sword in hand next morning, and to slash away at his face, or he at yours, for a matter of fifteen minutes, without rhyme or reason; certainly from no personal quarrel. He informed us, however, that a fatal termination to these ‘friendly’ meetings was a very rare occurrence. A red seam or two he showed us on his own noble brow were, he said, the usual results; glorious scars, much prized by their wearers, but to our biassed English notions simply stupid disfigurements.



However, in the little affair between Von Gessler and his friend, the sword of the former had found out a fatally weak spot in the cranium of the latter; and to avoid the penalty of manslaughter, our German friend was obliged to fly from his beloved Vaterland. Poor fellow! he was much affected by the recital of his troubles, and we all did our best to cheer him up, and apparently with good success.

Soon the fame of the great Von Gessler spread. His amiable and social manners acquired him the friendship and hospitality of many men in other colleges. Not that he deserted his first friends and introducers of St. Boniface; not at all. He made my rooms his head-quarters. 'I vas his first kind freund;' and thus he became known to a considerable portion of the 'Varsity as 'Von Gessler, a German fellow, a great friend of Binks of Boniface, a capital fellow, they say, sings and plays like a bird.'

Now, I was acquainted with the university town of Heidelberg, and in the early days of my new friendship with Von Gessler, I had cross-questioned him with regard to various streets, houses, &c. He evidently knew all about them. Farthermore he had construed a lot of 'Greek play' for me with considerable facility, and without a 'crib;' and last but not least, he had had a set-to with broadswords, at the gymnasium of M'Marum, with a noted performer, a member of our college, wherein 'old' Gessler held his own very fairly; so but little doubt existed in my mind as to his being the 'real Roger,' late of Heidelberg University.

A fortnight of uninterrupted sociality had elapsed, when our new friend informed us with much sorrow that he must take leave of his kind 'freunds.' The Herr Professor Max-Wöeler had given him but little hopes of his being able to acquire the special *philosophie* he desired, at the University of Oxbridge. Von Gessler had thought that he could live as an 'unattached' student, and study what course of lectures he liked; but he found this was not possible (things were not so ruinously liberal at that date of my story), so he had determined to seek some other seat of learning, and to waste no more time in the *agréments* of Oxbridge. I think we recommended Durham, having a vague notion that anything and everything was tolerated there. As things turned out, Von Gessler's experience of that seat of learning has done nothing towards verifying those notions. We were all very sorry to part with him. I felt I should miss him a great deal, for he had spent the greater part of his time in my rooms, where he would sit and read and smoke, while I was in lecture; in fact, he was like a 'tame cat' on my premises. He presented several of us with little souvenirs of his pleasant visit at Oxbridge, and we exchanged cartes-de-visite with a prodigality only known to that early era of photography. I can muster between two and three hundred cartes, more or less yellow, of the temporary friends of my

undergraduate days. I doubt if I could extract half-a-dozen from them now, even if I knew their directions; ah, *tempora mutantur*, &c.

As a little return for our kindness and hospitality, Von Gessler asked about a dozen of us to dine with him on the last night of his stay at Oxbridge, at his hotel, the Angel. We accepted with pleasure. I had made arrangements with some friends to go on the same day to a race-meeting near Reading, and we had to start rather early in the morning. I had rather a scramble to catch the train, and not finding my race-glasses in their usual place, I anathematised my scout for his 'tidy' habits, and left without them. I cannot remember at this date much about the racing. No doubt it was of the usual brilliant 'plating' class; but I do remember that I missed the train which should have brought me home in time for Von Gessler's farewell banquet at the Angel. I telegraphed my regrets, and hopes that I might yet arrive in time for dessert. I reached Oxbridge about half-past eight, and made for college to dress a bit before repairing to the Angel. I kicked at the gate in true undergraduate 'form'; the porter opened it, and informed me that the Dean was desirous of seeing me. Sundry qualms came over me, and I cut my morning lectures 'cut' that morning to attend the races, and the unpleasant questions that might be asked about the same. However, great was my relief, not to say astonishment, when my scout emerged from the lodge, and with a sarcastic twinkle in his eye—I felt confident Gessler had not 'tipped' him—observed:

'Ah, sir, your friend, sir, muster Gosler, he's turned out a hard one, he has. A reg'lar thief. He has took your operry-glasses an' pawned 'em. They're a-hanging up in the shop-winder now. And he's stole a silver-mug an' a lot o' spoons from University, and more nor eighty pounds in money an' all his clothes from a gennul-run at New, and he has pawned some, and got clean away with the best; howsomedever, the perlice is pretty sharp arter him.'

I confess I was pretty considerably staggered at this unpleasant news, backed up as it was by the appearance of sundry of the invited guests of the evening in the unusual Oxford garb of 'full evening rig.'

'Here's a pretty go!' they exclaimed; 'that beggar Gessler has turned out an infernal swindler. The "cheek" of the fellow asking us to dine! When we got to the Angel, the people there said they had never even heard of such a person. You are a nice fellow, thinks, to get us taken in and done for in this way; where on earth did you pick up your friend?'

'My friend!' I retorted; 'why, he's quite as much your friend as mine. I made his acquaintance about a fortnight ago in this very road. You remember it well, Jones; you came and lunched with me, when we all took such a fancy to the fellow. Certainly, he has made my rooms his head-quarters; but you have all "chummed" with



him as much as I have; and didn't you accept his invitation like a shot, that's all? My word, just look at you now! what a wasting on the desert air of all this magnificent apparel!

'Doocid lucky,' they said, 'that he has let us off so cheap. He hasn't bagged a bit of plate or any jewelry out of this college; nothing but your glasses gone, as far as we know at present. But, by Jove, he has made it hot for them at New! Old Buzzle, the senior tutor, is cleaned out of everything but his dress-clothes, which he had on in Hall. How on earth the fellow managed to smuggle it all past the gates, we can't make out. I suppose, like Mr. Joe Muggles in *Tom Brown*, he just watched the 'ed porter across to the Buttery for his evenin' glass, and then whipped it all out in a carpet-bag.'

'Well, Binks,' quoth another, 'your friend has done us out of dinner; we are too late for Hall, and we are all uncommon peckish; so the best thing you can do is to give us some supper, and we will condole with you, old fellow, on the sad loss of your opera-glasses. Expensive ones, I daresay; pawned for five "bob" probably; so you will get them back cheap.'

'All right! You go and change your coats while I make it straight with the Dean, and I will get some food in from Hinton's.'

Much that evening did we talk over our late friend the Herr von Gessler. A German student, no doubt, he had been. His little mortal fray with his brother student was voted 'gammon.' In all probability, for all his classical lore, ignorance of the proper construction of the words *meum* and *tuum* had something to do with his precipitate flight from Heidelberg. But above all did we congratulate ourselves on his handsome behaviour in sparing *us* in his raid. We recapitulated in turn the overwhelming loss we might individually have suffered, with the college plate recklessly left on luncheon-tables at the mercy of any one having the *entrée* to our rooms. How easy to whip up a pint or quart pot, and smuggle it off in the folds of a light paletot! Those three fivers in my dressing-case, sole relics of my last 'quarter'—I hurried to my bedroom; a glow of relief suffused my frame when I found them snug in the fancied security of the cleverly contrived, but universally known, secret drawer. Such was my gratitude for his sparing them, that I should have been glad to have given him my glasses as black-mail. But the crowning piece of impudence, the invitation to dine at the Angel! Ah, that was a sore point for many a day with the invited guests, from which I barely escaped. The 'jolly sell' that German friend of Binks paid off on some Boniface men, was a 'Varsity joke for many a month. We fought shy of strangers for a long time to come.

To bring my story to a close. Early one morning, about a week after the German's disappearance, while I was hesitating in bed

whether morning chapel, or another fast forty minutes with Morpheus, would be most beneficial to my general estate, my scout knocked at my door, popped in his head, and said with much appearance of delight, 'They've a nabbed him, sir. They've a got him, out on the landin'. The inspector, sir, wants you to come out and 'dentify his man and your glasses.'

I jumped out of bed like a shot, donned my dressing-gown, and entered my sitting-room. The prisoner was brought in, apparently shaking wrists with a gentleman in blue, and accompanied by a party in 'mufti,' who, I was led to understand, represented the great unknown power, 'Spector X. Ah, what a falling off was there in the appearance of the Herr von Gessler in his present estate from the trim and dapper individual who, guide-book in hand, had a fortnight before presented me with his card! Evidently he had not been in bed that night, nor had the least sacrifices been made to the Graces for some time. Their revenge usually follows apace. I fancy that a very short experience of apprehension conduces to a rapid deterioration of the external man. Given a 'faultless swell,' apprehend him more or less roughly, lock him up for the night, and I have reasons for believing that his appearance next morning before 'his worship' will be of a decidedly seedy and draggle-tailed character. Now Von Gessler had, with the usual taste of foreigners (I forget, he was in *mourning*, no doubt), chosen black shiny cloth as the correct material to keep 'the wind from his nobility.' And I think my readers will agree with me, that if there be one cloth more than another which requires to be frequently brushed and *bien soigné*, it is that fine old British black doeskin dear to clerics and the middle-classes. In Von Gessler's case, under the destructive influence of the police-cell, it had assumed a greeny-brown hue, which, coupled with his unkempt hair, frouzy linen, uncleaned boots, and dejected hang-dog look, made me almost pity the man.

I could not resist saying, 'Well, Gessler, I thought we were much too good friends to be parted for long; so you have come to look me up again, and bring me back my opera-glasses.'

Without taking his eyes from the floor, Gessler moaned out, 'Ach, you come to reproach me in my meesery! I not mean to take your glasses, I merely borrow for time, to use for me. I would give back after a time.'

'Bosh!' I said. 'Then I suppose you only meant to borrow all that money you made off with, eh? Why did you *sell* my glasses?' This was a 'closer' for poor Gessler.

Positively he had been apprehended while dining at the high table of a college at Camford. O, wondrous cheek! So open and unquestioning had he found the undergraduate youth of Oxbridge, what mine of unsuspection and gullibility could be more easily and profitably worked than their brethren of Camford? Three watches



had he already requisitioned from his new victims before he was captured, and as in a few days he had managed to work his way up to the high table, without doubt he would have relieved the Vice-Chancellor himself of his 'gold repeater' had time and the police allowed. I often think now of the unlimited impudence and knavish skill of that ex-German student. At the next assizes, if I remember rightly, three years with hard labour was the sentence passed on him. The Don of New prosecuted, I appeared as a witness, and my photo, being produced in court as having been found on the prisoner's person, enabled the counsel who was trying to defend him to afford considerable amusement to the audience at my expense. However, I got back my race-glasses. Once or twice I received a communication from the prisoner in Oxbridge gaol, begging me to supply him with books wherewith to prosecute his studies; he was still trying to keep up the 'philosophie' farce. I visited him once, and had an interview through a kind of grille, resulting, if I remember well, in mutual recriminations; I being too dense to see his case from a requisition point of view, he considering my demeanour and remarks to be unkindly towards him in his 'meesery.'

I hope his well-deserved punishment worked a cure, but I have a slight suspicion that such was not the case; for some few years afterwards, while skimming over the police news, I came across a charge against a certain Herr Brenner, whose knavish tricks bore a remarkable resemblance to the Oxbridge plant of Herr von Gessler, and who received a farther sentence of incarceration, 'former charges against the prisoner having been proved.'

Kind reader, do not be too severe upon us, and condemn us as soft green young muffs. I believe we were as 'cute as most young men at the unsuspecting age of twenty, when we were lavish of hospitality, deeming it possible that we might be entertaining even German angels unawares.

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## IN MEMORIAM

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I CAME to see the place where thou didst die,  
A bay engirt with wood-crown'd hills that climb,  
Crest above crest, to meet the blue warm sky,  
And white-wall'd villas perch'd on heights sublime ;  
Beautiful as a dream of Italy.  
' And this,' I said, ' the place where thou didst die !

Here, from yon hill, thy loosen'd spirit flew  
Up to the hills and tablelands of heaven ;  
Here fell thine old life's fetters, and the new  
Open'd in endless glory. To thee given  
What place we know not, by what streams thou goest,  
Or in what star, or where the heaven thou knowest.

But if to have thought only noblest thought,  
Pointed the pathway to the stars, and been  
The Apostle of the Beautiful, and taught  
Man to be something more than clay ; I ween,  
If this be to have conquer'd in life's race,  
Amidst the victors thine the loftiest place.

Poet, Romancer, Statesman, eloquent  
Of that far world thy spirit yearn'd to reach,  
Lo, now mortality's dull veil is rent,  
And thou dost know all secrets. Thou didst teach  
The soul's immortal essence. From death's shore  
To fairer lands thou beckonest evermore.

The world is poorer for the loss of thee,  
But richest in thy legacies ; for they  
Are deathless. Pleasant may thy footsteps be  
In that far clime remote from our brief day,  
Companion with those master-minds of whom  
Thou wast but student this side of the tomb.

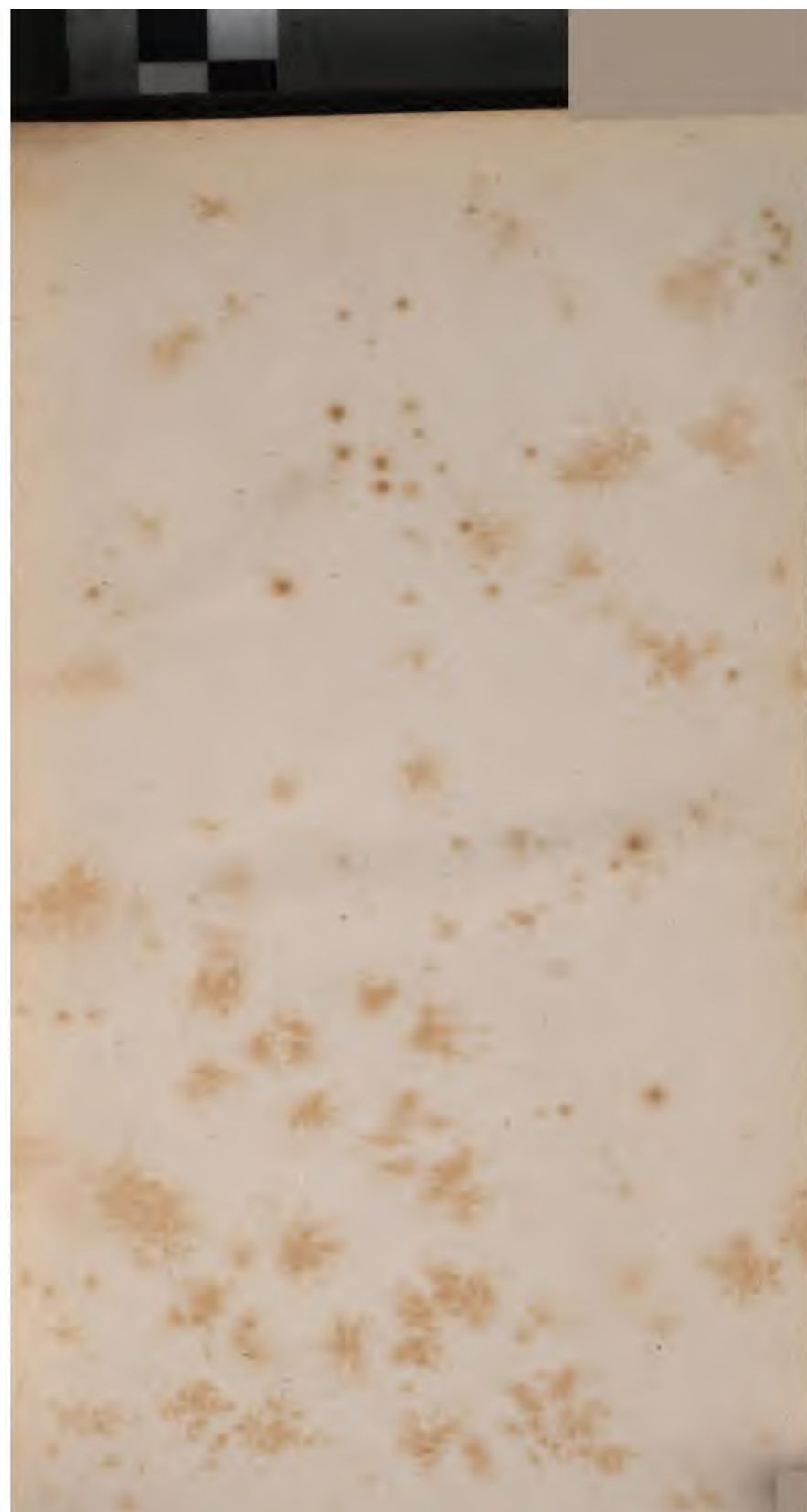


Shakespeare shall smile on thee, and mild Montaigne  
Approve thy kindred wit ; and thou shalt speak  
With mightiest Bacon, cleansed of earthly stain ;  
And thou shalt see the calm face of the Greek  
Who mock'd man's earth-born gods, and dimly saw  
The distant daybeam of diviner law.

Thus, with sad thoughts, slow step, and backward gaze,  
I look my last upon thy latest home,  
Crowning yon hill, where, on long summer days,  
Lingers the southern sun. As pilgrims come  
With reverent footsteps to a saintly shrine,  
So came I, Bulwer, to this home of thine.'

M. M.

TORQUAY, May 1873.





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